

NEW SERIES  
PART 6

Per. C. 793. 29

One Shilling. net  
Q900.C.53.39

# THE SCOTTISH REVIEW

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE OF THE  
INDEPENDENCE OF SCOTLAND.

Volume 39

Spring, 1916

Part 81

EDITOR - THE HON. R. ERSKINE OF MARR

## Contents

Not Dead but Sleeping. By the Hon. R. Erskine of Marr.

Land Settlement after the War. By William Diack.

Solvitur Risu. By Philalethes.

Nationalism and National Antagonism.

- (1) Nationalism. By M. MacMillan, LL.D.
- (2) National Antagonism. By José A. Duncan.

The Natural in Art. By A. Newman.

The New Nomenclature. By a Scottish Artisan.

The Spell of the Sea. By Coinneach MacLeod. (Translation by the Hon. R. Erskine of Marr).

Perth:

Milne, Tannahill, & Methven, 12-14 Mill Street.

Edinburgh: 74 George Street.

all  
most public

Excellent  
accomplish-

Now-a-  
days we  
bed and feel  
and know

Nothing  
can be done  
library is

The aim  
of the book

and  
and  
last, for

The gentle  
and liter-

Let  
Me  
Not  
It is  
Can

It is hor-  
rific.

The is  
so very  
be so

The

# The Scottish Review

SPRING, 1916.

*Not Dead, but Sleeping\**



## I.—THE STATEMENT.

**R**ECENT political events in England must have occasioned no small concern to thinking men in Scotland. The little success everywhere attending the English arms and measures; the passage of Mr. Asquith's pledge-bound Coercion Act through the English Parliament; the rapid growth of debts and charges occasioned by the war; the piling up of taxation, and the sinister menace of financial burdens yet more difficult to be borne than those with which we, and posterity, are already weighted; the appalling dearth in contemporary England of intellect proportionate to the exertions demanded by reason of the extraordinary times; the frequent suppressions of the right

\* For convenience I have divided this paper into two parts or heads, the first consisting of "The Statement," and the second, "The Application." The second head will consist of suggestions touching the application of the fundamentals laid down in the first.

## The Scottish Review

of free speech, joined to ever increasing encroachments on the liberty of the subject; English blundering, "muddling," and reckless extravagance—these are some few of many weighty reasons why patriotic Scotsmen should be more than commonly dissatisfied with the recent conduct and measures of the "Predominant Partner." And as the misfortunes and disabilities under which we at present groan and labour are direct consequences of the legislative Union of 1707, what Burns once described as "the boasted advantages" of this unhappy connexion are now, more than at any previous period of our history, fit and likely to be made the subject of a strict examination on the part of those Scotsmen who decline to be led and obliged by the vulgar party shibboleths, and who, in an age of subserviency, mediocrity, and confused political thought, have preserved sufficient originality, independence, and clarity of mind to conduct such an enquiry from the standpoint of the interests of Scotland and the welfare of its people.

The melancholy story of the Union of 1707 is familiar—at all events so far as its broad outlines are concerned—to most of us. It is true that the history of the negotiations that culminated in the Act of 1707, as that of those other endeavours that were made with a view to a similar end, is not as generally and as perfectly known as, doubtless, they might, and should, be. The public is too prone to regard the negotiations that immediately preceded the passing of the Act of Union of Scotland and England, as constituting an isolated movement in politics, whereas the truth is that those particular negotiations have their roots

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

far down in our history. The Act of 1707 was the fulfilment of certain schemes and dreams entertained by English statesmen as early, at least, as the reign of Edward I. A brief and tolerably complete account of these successive endeavours is already in existence. It is the work of a Mr. Bruce, who, when the question of a union with Ireland came under the consideration of ministers, was employed by the Duke of Portland to make a report on the Union of Scotland and England. The contents of this report should be familiar to every Scotsman who takes an intelligent interest in the past and present history of his country.

On the present occasion, however, I do not propose to enter into any detail touching the political events that preceded and attended the passage through Parliament of the incorporating Union of 1707, save in so far as I may be obliged thereto, in order to set my theme in as clear a light as I am capable of throwing on it. A full, true, and particular account of that affair is not to be contained within the limits of the present paper. Besides, pens far more capable than my own have already discharged that duty to the public. On the present occasion, therefore, I merely design to draw attention to one or two aspects of the Union to which, it appears to me, too little regard has hitherto been had, and on which not enough emphasis is accustomed to be laid; and in order the better to discharge my self-appointed task, the reader will be asked to bear with me whilst I utter a few reflexions on government in general, and the genius and character of the Scottish Parliament in particular.

It is a maxim with those who treat of government

## The Scottish Review

and the genius of political institutions, that the body of the people, or the nation, is immortal. The same idea was sought to be conveyed in respect of Kings, at whose demise it was formerly the custom to proclaim the successor to the throne in the same breath with which the decease of the late ruler was published to the world. *Le roi est mort : vive le roi !* But though in the case of the prince this attempt to bridge the gulf occasioned by the laws of nature was merely an ingenious shift on the part of the legal officers of the crown, yet it is true to say that, so far as the body of the people, or the nation, is concerned, the maxim referred to above is no transparent fiction of that courtly kind with which the address, or the subserviency of past generations of crown lawyers and jurists have rendered us familiar. If in a world in which death is the common lot of all, and wherein the evidences of change and decay confront us on all sides, it indeed be permissible to speak of immortality in connection with purely mundane institutions and affairs, then are we plainly justified, I think, in using this language of hyperbole in order to mark our sense of the, humanly speaking, imperishable nature of that institution which of all others seems to be the one that is destined and is best fitted, to endure indefinitely, namely, the body of the people, or the nation.

The intrinsic power and authority of every State is lodged in the body of the people, or the nation. All political institutions—Kings, Parliaments, etc.—exist for the benefit of the people, and from them alone do they (under God) derive their sanction. Even in the case of absolute monarchies, there is an ultimate

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

dependence of the crown on the people, which is very plain by what appears when, under a Government of that kind, the royal line fails, and, there being no discoverable heir to the throne, the people meet and choose and appoint a successor. In limited monarchies, however, the right of the people to alter the succession to the crown, as that of deposing an unworthy prince and appointing another in his stead, form part of the prerogative of the body of the people, and can in no wise be dispensed with ; the office of the crowned head, under such limited political dispensations, being purely of the nature of a trust, and is, therefore, revocable, and recoverable on the part of the nation, should the prince abuse the confidence reposed in him, and, by violating his oath, forfeit the affections and the allegiance of his subjects. The histories of Scotland and England afford several instances of princes abusing and exceeding their just powers, and of suffering the consequences provoked by their misdeeds ; and, were it necessary (which it is not) in order to the further explication of this branch of my theme, parallel examples of subjects altering the succession to the throne, and of deposing their rulers, might easily be drawn from the histories of other countries. Suffice it to say, however, that the Kingdom of Scotland was never patrimonial, even after the substitution of the Feudal for the native or Celtic system ; and that the intrinsic power and authority of the State have always rested with the body of the people, or the nation.

Bishop Leslie was the first writer that sought to probe beyond the Feudal beginnings of our Parliaments, so as to arrive at some just conclusions touching

## The Scottish Review

government in Scotland before the establishment of the King's Court, or the King's Great Council, the feudal original of the later Parliament ; and, though, owing to the imperfect nature of the information at his disposal, the account that he drew is characterised by many blunders and absurdities, nevertheless Bishop Leslie was the first Scottish jurist to make the necessary distinction between the genius of the Celtic political institutions and that of the Feudal government which, later, usurped their room. He pointed out that, whereas, under the former dispensation, all power and authority in the State were directly derived from the body of the people, this was not the case under the Feudal régime which constituted the King the sole proprietor—in theory at all events—of all the lands of the country, and pronounced him to be the only fount of honour therein, the plurality of the nation possessing little better than that intrinsic right to power and authority which is not to be denied to the nation, even under the most tyrannical and arbitrary forms of government. “A Scottish Parliament,” says Dr. Robertson,\* “consisted anciently of great barons, of ecclesiastics, and a few representatives of boroughs.” By the Feudal system, therefore, the plurality of the nation was debarred from all direct participation in the affairs of the country ; and in Scotland, as in every other kingdom in which that system obtained, the people were powerless to influence the measures of a few privileged rulers, except they had recourse to arms.

\* *The History of Scotland.*

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

I do not propose here to enter into any detail touching the successive steps that were taken with a view to the enlargement of the parliamentary powers ; the increasing the representative character of the Scottish legislature ; and the freeing of Parliament from its dependence on the King. But it may be safely ventured, in passing, that it was not until after the Revolution of 1689 that the Scottish legislature showed much sign of its being sensible of its responsibilities to the nation in respect to these important articles. No doubt, particular causes—one being the obvious desire of the Crown (subsequent to the Union of 1603) not to extend the popular prerogative in Scotland—operated to produce this somewhat singular result. The real Constitutional struggle, however, did not begin in Scotland until the comparatively late period I have named ; and, further, it is here worthy of remark that, "to the end of its history, Parliament remained a Feudal and a non-popular Chamber, from which all but the Crown's vassals and officials were excluded."\*

But though the Scottish Parliament "remained to the end of its history a Feudal and a non-popular Chamber," yet it would be a mistake to conclude from thence that no progress was made during the period extending from the Union of the Crowns to the introduction of the incorporating Union of 1707, in the direction of increasing the parliamentary powers, and of limiting the pretensions of the Crown to the right of interfering in the proceedings of the Scottish legislature. To this considerable Constitutional pro-

\* *The Scottish Parliament*, by Professor Sandford Terry.

## The Scottish Review

gress, Professor Sandford Terry is a willing and a respectable witness.

"The development (says he) of Parliament's internal powers, and of its relation to the Crown in the period, were astonishing. From holding a nominal and wholly subservient position in the Constitution it raised itself to one of independence. From being the mouthpiece of the Executive, it achieved equality with that authority. Therein its history runs parallel to that of the English Parliament in the period. But the Stewart Parliaments in England, after all, worked on lines already laid down, and on principles of popular liberty long since recognised. The Scottish Parliament had no such traditions.\* That the closer, but not invariably friendly, relations with England guided it to the same goal seems clear. But whatever the inspiration, the development of Parliament's Constitutional powers in the short space of little more than three generations is almost startling. From being a silent Chamber of registration,† it developed into a Chamber of legislation and debate. It purged itself of the presence of those who had no claim to represent either the hereditary or the elected Estates. It developed a procedure to meet its newly-acquired Constitutional powers. It obtained the control of its own membership, regulated the constituencies, and guarded the franchise.

I have already quoted this author as saying that, "to the end of its history, Parliament remained a Feudal and a non-popular Chamber." Until the placing of the great Reform Act on the English Statute Book, a similar allegation might reasonably be preferred against the House of Commons, which certainly lacked many of the characteristics of a "popular Chamber" until that measure was passed, even allowing that it then assumed that character, which is hardly consistent with the fact of subsequent extensions of

\* Professor Terry's reference is, of course, to Feudal, not to Celtic "traditions."

† That is to say, when our Parliament was under the thumb of the "Lords of the Articles."

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

the franchise. A legislature, however, which is elected on a franchise "from which all but the Crown's vassals and officials were excluded," cannot justly be considered as in any sense a "popular Chamber"; and this being so, the reader will, doubtless, be the more surprised that Professor Terry (after having used the words quoted above) should have held the following language in regard to the Scottish Parliament. "*Until* the last three generations of its existence (says he) Parliament neither in its composition, its procedure, nor its functions, fulfilled the idea of a popular and representative institution." The fact of the matter is, that neither the Scottish Parliament nor the English House of Commons were "popular Chambers" at the period to which these observations apply; and in view of that remarkable change in Professor Terry's language, to which I have drawn the reader's attention above, I can only conclude that, misled or dazzled by the undoubted great progress made by our Parliament during the period specified by his remarks, he has been somewhat less careful, in respect of the latter excerpt quoted by me, to reconcile statement with fact than we have a right to expect of a writer who is usually as exact as he always is learned and informing.

But though it is impossible to regard the Scottish Parliament as a "popular Chamber," yet the final words with which Professor Terry concludes his interesting account of its Constitution and characteristics will, doubtless, be heartily endorsed by all who have devoted any attention to those matters.

"Even (he says) in the Seventeenth Century, in spite of the tardy and sudden development of its representative character and

## The Scottish Review

powers, its history, in the two periods of Stewart despotism, shows it complacently adapting itself to the fluctuations of royal policy. That the characteristics of its past record would have been perpetuated, had the Union not terminated its existence, it is impossible to believe ; for everything in the last quarter of the Seventeenth Century points to a new era in its history. Pathetic in other respects, the Union is tragic in this, that it for ever closed the career of Parliament at the moment when, after a long preparation, it was ready and able to play a fitting part in the nation's history."

In fine, just as the Scottish Parliament was beginning to prove its usefulness to the nation, the Crown and the English Government conspired together to cut it off.

The events and negotiations immediately preceding the holding of what is commonly styled the "Union Parliament" may now be briefly referred to. As soon as the Act of Security had been "touched" by the royal sceptre, a retaliating Act was passed by the English Parliament, which thus thought to show "a proper spirit," in face of the measures of the Scottish government ; and it was under these uncommonly unpromising and threatening circumstances that the English Government renewed to itself the necessity of attempting the abolition of our native Parliament, in order, as they now speciously expressed it, to spare the two kingdoms concerned all the horrors and miseries of a civil war. The Scots, however, would listen to no suggestions in favour of an accommodation touching the points that were in dispute between the two countries, until the English had repealed their retaliatory Act, which was presently done ; and, in the year 1702, the Scottish Parliament consented to send twenty Commissioners to London, who were instructed

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

to consult with the twenty-three English Commissioners that had been appointed for that purpose, touching the terms of a Union. The negotiations of these Commissioners, however, came to nought ; their proceedings were broken off ; the Scottish Commissioners returned home ; and, though the under-world of contemporary politics and political intrigue continued to hum with Union proposals, schemes, and suggestions, yet no overt steps were taken with a view to the accomplishment of the English designs, until three years after the failure of the international negotiations referred to above.

Though it is not to be denied that "Union" was in the political air, as it were, at that time, yet the Scottish Parliament that met 5th October, 1706, did so without having received from that inconsiderable portion of the nation which the Commissioners (as they were commonly styled) represented in Parliament, any mandate to bring in, or conclude, any measure of Union with England. Against this objection, which was raised by those that desired to consult their constituencies, it was presently urged by the tools of the Court and the English ministry, that the powers of the Commissioners were ample, inasmuch as they had been returned to Parliament in order "*to do all things for the good of the country*" ! Leave to consult the constituencies was accordingly refused ; and in this characteristic fashion was this game of unexampled fraud, hypocrisy, illegality, and treachery begun.

The Scottish Commissioners charged with the introduction of the Union proposals into the native legislature, and the conduct of that measure therein,

## The Scottish Review

were, naturally, extremely desirous that no particulars of the Bill should become known until the contents of the measure were formally communicated to Parliament. Accordingly, lest the nation should presume to debate a measure which struck at the root of all their liberties as a free and independent people, and designed to sink their Constitution in that of another country, the terms of the Act of Union were kept a profound secret, so far as the body of the people, or the nation, was concerned ; and lest that information which was denied to the Scots at home should, peradventure, reach them through a foreign channel, the English ministry took care to issue a proclamation, forbidding the press of that kingdom to discuss the Union, and commanding the lieges not to make it the subject of their wagers, which latter prohibition throws an interesting side-light on the manners and customs of the " Merry England " of that time.

But no sooner was the Scottish Parliament met, than the Court party and the friends of the English administration united to drive on the affair of the Union with the most scandalous precipitancy imaginable, and with the most cynical disregard of the sentiments of those Commissioners who, on Constitutional and patriotic grounds, opposed the Government Bill. And since, by means of wholesale bribery and corruption, the Court party commanded a plurality of votes in that legislature, whose Constitution they designed to destroy, they neither scrupled, nor were ever at a loss for excuses to stifle debate, and to baulk reasoned and deliberate discussion of the Union proposals. To all the arguments, reasonings, expostu-

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

lations, appeals, threats, denunciations, and sarcasms employed by the party that stood firm for the national honour and the national rights throughout these melancholy and, so far as the tools of the Crown and the English administration were concerned, disgraceful proceedings, the Court faction had but a solitary reply to tender, which consisted in a vote to *proceed to consider the articles of the Treaty*, irrespective of the furious cries of the mobs outside the Chamber, or the indignant protests of those who voiced the national dismay and disgust within it. But the great wheel of the Court machine consisted in the Equivalent ; and " many were the handles\*" which it afforded to the Unionists when going about " to bubble over " the Scots parliamentarians to support of their measure. The Equivalent was " the mighty bait," by means of which our Constitution was to be undone, and the nation was designed to be deprived of its independence and all its representative institutions. The Equivalent was remitted in cash to Scotland ; but the way in which the money was to be applied, as the designs of the Court and the English ministry in adjusting the incidence of this dishonourable largess, are, perhaps, best described in the words of a contemporary chronicler. The money was sent to Scotland (says he), though

" The Scots were to pay it, and much more, back again in a few years, by engaging to bear a share of the burdens imposed on England, and appropriated for payment of England's debts. This was a fund—said the Unionists—sufficient to put Scotland in a capacity for prosecuting trade, erecting manufactures, and im-

\* *Memoirs Concerning the Affairs of Scotland.*

## The Scottish Review

proving the country ; but in reality here was a swinging bribe to buy off the Scots Members of Parliament from their duty to their country, as it accordingly proved. For to it we may chiefly ascribe that so many of them agreed to this Union. The hopes of what they had expended on the African Company, and obtaining payment of debts and arrears due to them by the Scots Government (it being articled in the Treaty that it should be expended this way) prevailed upon many to overlook the general interest of their country."

But bribery and corruption, as well unarticled as articled, was the Court and English capital way of driving on the iniquitous affair in which the twain were engaged. One by one, the Scottish nobles were "approached" by the Court, through the channel of its accredited tools and agents in Parliament. Those who were needy, and had few principles to sell, were bought correspondingly cheap. Others, though poor, proved, on being "sounded" by the Court, stiffer, having principles which they had but recently acquired, and were reluctant to part with, save in exchange for a bribe proportionate to the effort it had cost them to obtain these curious novelties. Some that had little occasion, and less concern, for principles, and whose past lives, as whose present way of living, forbade the notion of their ever being like to stand in the slightest need of them, yet rated their vote and their interest highly, on the ground of family connections ; the extent of their estates ; their wealth ; and the number of their vassals ; and these men were much dearer to buy. Some there were, too, who had riches conjoined with principles which, if not absolutely steadfast and sound, yet required a vast deal of squeezing and pressing and manipulating before their owners could be brought to entertain the idea of their surrender into the hands

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

of the *ex officio* keepers of Her Majesty's conscience ; and these men were, so far as the Court and the Courtezans were concerned, the most expensive of all. A few of the Scottish nobles, it is true, stood out manfully for honour and decency, for Constitution and Country; and these reaped their just reward in the plaudits, the respect, and affection of the vast plurality of their countrymen. The Duke of Atholl was one of those who, in Parliament assembled, " took instruments," as the expression goes ; and publicly protested against the Union measure, as being a violation of the Constitution of the country ; an Act of designed illegality ; and a Treaty utterly subversive and destructive of the rights and liberties of a free, ancient, and independent people. But the example afforded by a few honourable and patriotic nobles was powerless to stay the rapid progress of the rot that had entered into the bowels of the Scottish Parliament through the gilded channel of the Equivalent, and that of the measures employed by the Court, in order to corrupt those whose opposition, in other places and on different grounds, they nevertheless had good reason to stand in lively fear of. Petitions and addresses against the Union measure might pour in from all parts of the country ; the chairs and chariots of the leading Unionists might be daily insulted by furious mobs, as they made their way to and from the Parliament House ; the most sanguinary and ferocious threats of reprisals might be indulged in regard to the framers and supporters of the execrated measure ; men holding political and religious principles of the most divergent character might publicly unite to protect the threatened liberties of their common country—

## The Scottish Review

but these, and countless other extraordinary manifestations of the national rage, disgust, and indignation, were utterly powerless to stay the progress of the illegal and unconstitutional proceedings to which the plurality of the members of an unpopular and unrepresentative Chamber now stood, unfortunately, committed.

As a rule, that cause is a poor one which cannot be proved out of the mouths of those who oppose it; and lest it should be imagined that the subject with which I am here dealing is susceptible of an interpretation very different from that which Scotsmen are accustomed to place on it, I crave the reader's permission to append a few extracts from the late Professor William Symth's *Lectures on Modern History*—an English historian, who, like all his countrymen, applauded the Union, but, unlike some of them, denounced and deplored the means by which the Act was procured to be passed.

"The point of interest that next interests us is (says he—Lecture xxv.), *how* the Union was carried. This is a part of the subject which cannot be contemplated without pain. It was carried by force and fraud. The victories of the Duke of Marlborough left England with a strong military force at her disposal; and the Duke of Hamilton proved at last a traitor to his country; so did others. This foul name must belong to him, and must always more or less belong to all men who on great public occasions pursue even the right measure *only* because they are corrupted: who act upon any motives but the good of their country. . . . It is melancholy to observe that a great nation like England could never adopt a proper system of policy *before*, and never behave with proper liberality and prudence, till both were extorted from her by the ungenerous motives of selfishness and fear."

Parliaments exist for the benefit of the people, and not the people for the benefit of Parliaments.

## Not Dead, but Sleeping

Elective legislatures, however narrow their genius, cramped their powers, or antiquated their Constitutions, cannot abolish themselves, or sink, or transfer the rights and prerogatives that appertain to them, save with the consent of the nation to which they belong, and from which they derive their powers and authority. I repeat that no Parliament can subvert its Constitution, or sink its prerogatives and functions in that of another country, without first submitting the Union proposals to the opinion of the constituencies, and receiving therefrom the unequivocal approval of the electorate. In the case of the Scottish Parliament this procedure (whose fairness and reasonableness will be questioned by none) was not adopted. The Act of Union was passed in defiance of the wishes of the nation, and in the teeth of an opposition which was as violent and honest as it surely was lawful and well founded. The constituencies (narrow as they were) were not consulted. Bribery and corruption of the most odious and flagrant kind were resorted to, in order to force a way for the measure through the legislature. The Crown and the English ministry made little secret of their intention to proceed *vi et armis*, should the measure fail to pass in a "Constitutional" way. The Scottish Parliament, having refused to consult the constituencies in order to get the necessary powers to treat of such a measure, had no lawful title to pass the Act, which was an undoubted violation of the Claim of Right, as well as of the rights and prerogatives of the Crown, which not only stultified itself by lending itself to support of the English designs, but, by reason of the famous, or infamous, Act of

## The Scottish Review

Charles II., was guilty of high treason in giving its assent to the Treaty. Truly may it be said of this unnatural and unholy Act, that it was born in sin, and in iniquity did its projectors conceive it. It was an unparalleled usurpation on the just rights of a free and independent people. It was a stinking impertinence. It was illegal. It was a fraud ; and that which is fraudulent, and has been procured to be done by force, is binding on no man's conscience and conduct. A marriage, will, or testament, or, indeed, any other form of agreement, perpetrated under such conditions, is *ipso facto*, null and void. The Act of Union of 1707 was procured to be passed under precisely such conditions ; and since neither time nor eternity can convey a prescriptive right in respect of what has been done *ultra vires*, and partakes of the essence of fraud, injustice, and illegality, the Act of Union of 1707 is now, as it was in the beginning, and ever shall be, **NULL AND VOID.**

R. ERSKINE OF MARR.

(*To be continued*).



## *Land Settlement after the War*

At first blush it may seem a trifle premature to discuss the economic problems after the war at a time when the thunder of the cannon is still reverberating over Europe. Nearly twenty months have elapsed since that memorable day in August when the dogs of war were let loose—and the end is not yet. Indeed, as the military authorities declare, with vehement iteration, we are not yet within sight of the end. To the superficial observer it might well seem that the road to Tipperary is every bit as long as it was when the first shot was fired in the biggest and bloodiest war in the history of humanity. The terrible drain on the manhood of Europe must one day come to an end, however, and there is a very real danger that we may find ourselves as badly prepared for the advent of peace as we were for some of the exigencies of war. It is of the highest importance, therefore, that the people of Scotland—and the people of England too—while they do not abate by one jot or tittle their interest in the great struggle, should at the same time devote some attention to the economic problems with which the Kingdoms will be confronted at the cessation of hostilities. Among the most important of these problems will be the provision of civil employment for the disbanded soldiers when the great armies

## The Scottish Review

now in France and Salonika, in Egypt and Mesopotamia are dissolved. Problems of taxation such as Europe has never before been confronted with will also have to be faced, and there is a very real danger that acute industrial depression may form part of the aftermath of the war. Sweeping changes may also be necessary if these Kingdoms are to retain their former commercial positions, and face the German competition, which, whatever the outcome of the war, can scarcely fail to be bitterer and more menacing than ever before. In the meantime, however, it is with the problem of the soldiers home from the wars that we are mainly concerned.

On both sides of the Tweed, and in the Dominions beyond the seas as well, the question of land settlement after the war is being widely discussed, and rightly so. Some of the suggestions made may be mischievous and reactionary, and others visionary and impracticable, but it is satisfactory nevertheless that public attention should be directed to this aspect of the after-war problem. It is quite evident that a strenuous effort will be made to promote emigration to the Colonies when the great armies now on the Continent are disbanded. Already a movement in that direction is being actively organised. Quite recently the *Morning Post* gave the first indications of a carefully-laid scheme to boom emigration, and herd the disbanded soldiers off to the Colonies. "We desire," says the staid organ of the English Conservatives, "to offer those men who have so gallantly served the Empire a fair and favourable opportunity of settling down in any of the Colonies they may select." Even in Scot-

## Land Settlement after the War

land that short-sighted proposal has received a certain amount of support from that section of the Conservative press which is "thirled" to the landlord party. The Colonial Governments, too, are turning covetous eyes to the sturdy men in khaki, and are already making preparations for a big wave of emigration on the "outbreak of peace." Mr. Walter Hayden, the author of "Canada and the War," says, "We have to make up our minds, and we ought to be preparing for an emigration movement on an unprecedented scale, and the present time is none too early to make a thorough investigation into the area of the land available for settlement in all the Dominions." Mr. Hayden adds that it would be possible to place, if necessary, even 100,000 on the land in Canada alone, and he points to the special facilities which the Dominion Government offers for suitable settlers. The Minister of Lands in New South Wales is developing a scheme for settling wounded or disabled soldiers on the land—or at any rate those who desire to secure farms. Altogether one thousand farms will be made available throughout the State on an early date. Each man will be able if necessary to secure an advance of £100 to develop his holding. In other Colonies similar projects are under consideration. The Royal Colonial Institute is also moving in the matter, and has appointed a Committee to consider the measures to be taken with a view to securing the co-operation of the Imperial and Dominion Governments in a joint scheme for settling soldiers and their families on the land. Under the auspices of the Institute, Sir H. Rider-Haggard has undertaken a mission to South Africa, Australia,

## The Scottish Review

and Canada, for the purpose of "investigating the possibilities of land settlement and employment generally of ex-service men after the war." Of the qualifications of the distinguished novelist to conduct that important inquiry there need be no question. Sir Rider's interest in agriculture is as sincere as his knowledge of the African wilds where Allan Quatermain hunted wild elephants is extensive. At the same time the whole movement to "boost" emigration after the war, is of unsavoury origin, is economically unsound, and is, moreover, a glaring example of bad statesmanship. The Colonial soldiers—many of them men of Scottish descent—have rendered splendid service to the Allies' cause in these troublous times through which the world is passing. At Anzac and in Flanders they have displayed a heroism and a spirit of self-sacrifice that time will never dim. It is not lack of appreciation of the part which the Colonies have played in the great struggle that gives rise in many quarters to hostility to the emigration proposal, but the deep-rooted conviction that—as a result of the terrible losses of recent months—the Motherlands must keep as many as possible of their young men at home. What, after all, "speaking in quite unofficial language," as Thomas Carlyle used to say, is the true social and economic significance of this emigration scheme? Is it not, stripped of all the verbiage of the politicians, but a paltry, cheap-jack plan to make the country richer by banishing the wealth-producers beyond its borders?

Let there be no misunderstanding. There is no objection—on social, economic, or national grounds—to the emigration which is merely the natural overflow

## Land Settlement after the War

of the surplus population. Scotsmen, at least, have never doubted that

'Twas to give room for wand'ring in it  
That the world was made so wide.

The colony-building instinct of the Scots is a fine symptom. In Canada, in Australia, in South Africa, they have helped to make the waste places of the earth blossom like a garden. They have built up new Dominions, and by native grit and enterprise have taken an honourable part in the development of the Colonies. To attempt to curb the roving and adventurous spirit of the Scot would be as futile as it would be foolish. Quite different, however, is the artificially fostered emigration which denudes the country of its best blood and sinew, and is responsible for the desolation of the Highlands—emigration fostered and encouraged by the landlords who prefer the money-bags of the sporting millionaire to the agricultural holdings and the industrious rural populations on which the real wealth and prosperity of the nation depend, fostered, too, by the Colonial Governments and their emigration agents, and silently acquiesced in, if not actually encouraged, by the servile Tory press of Scotland.

Social reformers frequently talk of the evils of rural depopulation—of the rural exodus—but one wonders sometimes whether the actual extent of the emigration drain is fully realised by the people of Scotland. The official emigration figures reveal a gravely disquieting situation. The number of people who left the United Kingdoms during 1914, mainly for the Colonies and the United States, was as follows :—

## The Scottish Review

<i>Country of Residence.</i>			<i>Total.</i>
England,	...	...	146,080
Wales,	...	...	2,921
Scotland,	...	...	34,219
Ireland,	...	...	30,918

The emigration season was approaching a close before the outbreak of hostilities, so that the outflow was less affected by the war than might have been expected. The totals for the three previous years, 1911 to 1913, are as follows :—

1913.			
England,	...	...	294,529
Wales,	...	...	5,276
Scotland,	...	...	70,164
Ireland,	...	...	45,047
1912.			
England,	...	...	230,452
Wales,	...	...	4,154
Scotland,	...	...	59,408
Ireland,	...	...	36,753
1911.			
England,	...	...	294,201
Wales,	...	...	8,488
Scotland,	...	...	88,852
Ireland,	...	...	49,280

Even more significant are the emigration statistics for the decade 1901-1911 :—

<i>Country of Residence.</i>		<i>Total.</i>
England and Wales,	...	1,919,354
Scotland,	...	473,318
Ireland,	...	492,680

## Land Settlement after the War

Some further details of the exodus from Scotland and Ireland, where the emigration drain has been most serious, point the same moral :—

		Scotland.	Ireland.
1851 to 1861,	...	182,954	231,308
1861 to 1871,	...	158,226	866,626
1871 to 1881,	...	170,757	530,924
1881 to 1891,	...	278,626	741,883
1891 to 1901,	...	187,961	465,146

For England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, the totals during the six decades—1841-1901—are as follows :—

	The United Kingdoms.		
1841-1851,	...	...	1,692,063
1851-1861,	...	...	2,249,355
1861-1871,	...	...	1,976,577
1871-1881,	...	...	2,244,338
1881-1891,	...	...	3,560,096
1891-1901,	...	...	2,659,936
1901-1911,	...	...	4,790,826

The figures for 1915 have, of course, little bearing on the emigration situation. During the first year of the war, however, the number of persons who left the Clyde for places out of Europe was 7818. Of these, 4559 were bound for the United States, 3232 for Canada, 6 for Australia and New Zealand, and 21 for other places.

A closer scrutiny of the figures we have quoted reveals some interesting facts. While the deadly drain from Ireland during the last half of the nineteenth

## The Scottish Review

century has been substantially checked, the exodus from Scotland has been steadily increasing. Indeed, for several years past, the Scottish emigration drain has been substantially higher than that of Ireland. More remarkable, however, and much more significant, is the comparison with the outflow from England. At the census of 1911 the population of England and Wales was, in round figures, 36,000,000 ; and of Scotland, 4,760,000. The emigration drain from Scotland during the decade, 1901-1911, was 473,318—approximately one in every 10 of the population. The exodus from England was 1,919,354—about one in every 19. There is no need to set forth in detail the calculations for the other periods under review ; suffice it to say that the emigration rate from Scotland is very nearly 2 to 1 compared with that of England. To this must also be added the not inconsiderable number of Scotsmen who obey the time-honoured injunction, and "haud sooth" across the Border. The result of all this was apparent in the ominous census statistics of 1911. The census showed that in nearly every rural district in Scotland—more particularly in the north—the population is declining. Nay, more. In Argyllshire, Berwickshire, Perthshire, and Sutherlandshire, the population is not only less than it was in 1891, but is actually less than in 1801. In ten years—1901 to 1911—there was a net decline of Scotland's agricultural population of 10,965—5·23 per cent.\*

\* This aspect of rural depopulation is more fully discussed in an article by the present writer on "The Province and the Land" which appeared in the Autumn 1914 issue of *The Scottish Review*.

## Land Settlement after the War

Truly, the money-grabbing lairds of Scotland have much to answer for. They have sold the crofters' land for English and American gold, and—in spite of the heavy emigration toll to which these figures bear witness—they are nevertheless actively encouraging that serious exodus which, in homely but expressive language, is "bleeding the rural districts of Scotland white." Nor are the Colonial Governments themselves guiltless, for they, too, have done their best to foster this artificial emigration rush. Hireling emigration agents have painted the "Golden West" as a land flowing with milk and honey, relying on the perennial gullibility of the human race when the stern facts of life discredited their glowing pictures. "Facts," however, "are chiels that winna ding," as Burns says, and even before the outbreak of the war it was becoming increasingly evident that in many of the big industrial centres in the Colonies, the congestion of the labour market, particularly during the winter months, was just as serious as in any of the big centres of industry in these Kingdoms. This was notoriously the case in Canada. That there is still room in the more remote parts of the Dominion for men with a certain amount of capital, and with practical knowledge of agriculture is, of course, perfectly true. It is hard pioneer-work that awaits them—drudgery if you will—but for men of grit and physical vigour, there is the prospect of a home and rough comfort and plenty, such as one can scarcely hope for under the existing land laws of Scotland. But that is the best that can be said of the Golden West. Those who are in touch with the industrial life of Canada know that

## The Scottish Review

even before the outbreak of the war, economic conditions in the Dominion were becoming rapidly worse, and in all the big towns the unemployment difficulty was becoming increasingly acute. One Canadian journal thus tersely sums up the situation :—

" Economic conditions in Canada were in a bad way before the war began, and the breaking out of the war was, in a measure, our salvation. Thousands upon thousands of idle men were parading the streets of our large cities clamouring for bread, and those in authority were at their wits'-end what to do with the daily increasing hosts of idle men."

From Trade Union reports and working-class journals, many similar statements might be quoted. On the first big clash of arms the situation at once became very much worse—and very much better. It became worse in the sense that in many industries—particularly in the building trades which fill so important a place in the industrial life of an expanding country such as Canada—the collapse was virtually complete, but it became better in the sense that there was a place in the firing line for every man able and willing to shoulder a rifle. Subsequently the organisation of munition factories, and the call for skilled workmen, both at home and on the other side of the Atlantic, still fuller relieved an exceedingly serious situation. In South Africa, too, although the position was by no means so serious as in Canada, the outlook was nevertheless far from encouraging from the emigrant's point of view. The almost unanimous testimony of Scottish artisans who have settled in the Transvaal or in Orangia is that the conditions there are not by any means so good as they were before the Boer war.

## Land Settlement after the War

The lesson of the strikes of 1912, which resulted in the deportation of seven active Trade Union leaders, has not yet been forgotten by the democracy of Scotland

The sober truth is that neither in South Africa, nor in Canada, is the industrial situation such as would justify an influx of immigrants on the colossal scale contemplated by the Colonial Governments, the landlords of England and Scotland, and the paid agitators of the English Conservative Press.

There is something sinister in this move to hustle the disbanded soldiers off to the Colonies. The young men have learned much during their sojourn in the trenches. The gallant lads who were sent across the Channel to "crush German militarism" are scarcely likely to submit tamely to the attempt to Prussianise the free institutions of the home lands. The men who have fought for freedom on the battle-fields of Flanders will return soon to a land where they cannot call a single foot of earth their own, where they may not even place their tired feet on the broad acres reserved as sporting sanctuaries. Will the men who faced German bullets in defence of their own country tolerate such an iniquitous arrangement? Will they not rather be prepared to play equally as determined a part in the movement for the drastic reform of the land laws of Scotland? Is that not all the more reason why every encouragement should be given to them to remain at home? Incidentally, too, does it not suggest a very transparent reason why the landlord party on both sides of the Tweed are lending their active support to the movement for drafting the disbanded soldiers off to the Colonies? The men who

## The Scottish Review

have fought for Scotland and England deserve a better fate than relegation—say to South Africa to supply cheap labour for the German Jews and other cosmopolitan financiers who “rule the roost” in that particular part of the Empire. Even as a hired hand to a Canadian farmer, the disbanded soldier might sometimes in the bitterness of his soul be tempted to ask “What have I done to deserve this?” All these reflections emphasise the points on which I have been laying stress—that the huge emigration boom contemplated by the Colonial Governments is unsound from an economic point of view, and is at variance with the best interests of these nations. In Scotland, in particular, if carried out on a great scale, it may well become a menace to social well-being.

More than once, in the pages of *The Scottish Review*, I have emphasised the importance, in peace as well as in war, of a strong and numerous rural population. “That nation is strongest,” said Froude, “which has the largest proportion of its people with a direct interest in the land.” Judged by this standard, the weakening of the defensive forces of the country—as witnessed in the desolate glens of the north—becomes a very real national peril, and emphasises the importance of land settlement in Scotland after the war. In England, too, the situation is scarcely less serious. Writing on this subject, Mr. A. G. Gardiner, the editor of the *Daily News*, sounds a timely note of warning:—

“Is this terrible rot to continue, or are we at last awake to its tragic meaning and determined at all costs to apply drastic remedies? There is a song of these days which has a refrain about keeping the flag flying till the boys come home. But where are they going

## Land Settlement after the War

when they come home? Are we to offer them the old fourteen shillings a week on the land, and when they refuse that, as they will, send them with millions of others to the desolation of the docks and the slums to revive all the old horrors of unemployment? Are we going to point with magnanimity to the plains of Canada and Australia and invite them to leave the country they have saved, and find a living elsewhere? There will, doubtless, be an impulse to emigration, but we must remember that after the enormous loss of our manhood in the war, we cannot afford a great drift of our most vigorous blood away from our shores. When 'the boys come home' we must see that we make it worth their while to stay at home. This is not a question of sentiment, but of necessity."

That is the crux of the whole situation. "We cannot afford a great drift of our most vigorous blood away from our shores," and to no part of the United Kingdoms is that remark so applicable as to Scotland. It was Mr. Andrew Carnegie, I believe, who once said, that "every immigrant into the United States is worth 5000 dollars." If they are worth that to the American capitalists, it might also be to the advantage of the nation to keep some of our lads at home. If the Colonial Governments are prepared to give liberal assistance to soldier-settlers, why should not the Government here devote a sum equivalent even to seven or ten days' cost of the war to ensure the success of a really comprehensive scheme of land colonisation in Scotland and England. As Mr. Jesse Collings—a fine old English Tory of the old School—rightly remarks, "If facilities are afforded them (discharged soldiers) to emigrate, and no arrangements are made for keeping them on the land at home, that amounts to a form of compulsion."

Land Settlement for discharged soldiers—not in the Colonies but in Scotland and England—is not only

## The Scottish Review

a praiseworthy project on the part of the State, but would also, I am convinced, prove a profitable national enterprise. Certainly if carried out on sound business lines, there is no reason why it should not be attended with satisfactory results. But careful management will be essential right from the outset ; one false step might ruin the whole enterprise.

The Special Committee, presided over by Sir Harry Verney, M.P., which was appointed by the Board of Agriculture to consider the question of the settlement or employment on the land of discharged soldiers and sailors, has grappled with the problem more boldly than might have been expected, and, in the main, the recommendations are on fairly sound lines. There are certain pitfalls which must be carefully avoided, however, if the scheme is to be attended with the success which its importance merits. The Committee recommend that agricultural colonies shall be set up by the State on a large scale for the employment of soldiers who wish to take up agricultural work. When one remembers that the agricultural population of Scotland and England has decreased by about a million during the past fifty years, it can scarcely be said that the proposal to acquire and equip 5000 acres for these pioneer colonies is over-ambitious. Supporters of the proposal suggest that eventually as many as 200,000 people might thus be settled on the land. Indeed if the scheme of small-holdings were linked up—as it ought to be—with other rural industries, there is no reason why the modest figure mentioned should not be at least quadrupled. The proposals of the Verney Committee relate, in the first instance at any

## Land Settlement after the War

rate, to England and Wales, but a similar scheme has, for some time past, been occupying the attention of land reformers of Scotland. Some time ago the Corporation of Glasgow passed an important resolution bearing on this subject. Copies of the resolution were forwarded to all the principal public bodies in Scotland, and so far as can be gathered, the Glasgow proposal has met with general approval. As the motion sums up the views of a very large proportion of the Scottish people, I quote it in full before proceeding to discuss the principles embodied in it, in the light of the Verney report :—

" That in view of the great number of maimed men who will be in the country after the war, and in respect of the number of young men at present serving with His Majesty's Forces, who, on the declaration of peace, will be desirous of taking up an open-air life, the Corporation petition the Government—(1) to introduce legislation for the acquisition of land in the neighbourhood of industrial centres, and for the establishment thereon of Colonies to be taken up primarily by the men referred to ; and (2) to make such provisions as may be considered necessary for the purpose of meeting the expense of equipping the said small holdings, and of defraying the other expenses incidental to the establishment thereof."

With certain reservations and qualifications, that resolution will command the hearty approval of Scottish land reformers. But reservations and qualifications there must be. Land Settlement is a fine ideal, but life on a Scottish small-holding, even under the most favourable conditions, is not a leisurely round of ease and comfort. Far from it. There is a great deal of work on the land that could not be efficiently done by war-worn soldiers. Those who, like the writer, know from personal experience what life on a small-



## The Scottish Review

holding means, will hesitate to "reward" our maimed and wounded soldiers in this way. Many of those who talk so glibly of providing agricultural work for the wounded do not seem to realise that the small-holder's lot is an exceedingly arduous one, involving often the hardest of physical labour from daylight to dawn. Even thus, in our Scottish glens, it is only possible to wrest a meagre livelihood from the soil. When work on a small-holding is combined with a subsidiary occupation—such as day labour on a farm—the crofter's life is one unending round of drudgery. That—it is to be hoped—is not the reward which our Scottish Town Councils have in view for our disbanded soldiers. More probably, however, what is contemplated is a number of small-holdings in favoured districts, where fruit-farming can be carried on, or in the vicinity of big industrial centres where ordinary agricultural work can be combined with poultry-farming or market-gardening. Under such conditions, the prospects are decidedly brighter, although it must not be forgotten that in both the industries mentioned a considerable amount of expert skill and "specialisation" is necessary in order to ensure success.

In the Highland regiments now fighting on the Continent, there is excellent material for the re-colonisation of Scotland. Nothing better could be wished for. At the same time careful selection of the "settlers" will be necessary. One can readily believe that many of the men now in the trenches, after their lengthy experiences of life in the open, will be loth to return to the office stool or to their old places behind the counter. Equally true is it that the farm-labourers

## Land Settlement after the War

now in the army will hesitate to go back to the byre, the bothy, and the drudgery of the fields. Some, like Cincinnatus, may return to the planting of their cabbages, but many others will seek new occupations at home, or turn their wandering steps towards Canada or the United States. There will be a certain reshuffling of occupations after the war, but aversion to the office stool is not necessarily a guarantee of success as a small-holder. The suggestion has been made that the soldiers should receive expert guidance in agricultural work, and a certain amount of preliminary training before they enter on their new career. It is exceedingly doubtful, however, if even that will ensure the success of the soldier-settlers. The truth is that lads born in the city do not take kindly to agricultural work. The successful agriculturist, I sometimes think, is like the poet, born, not made, and if the land colonisation scheme is to be given a fair chance of success, preference must be given to those who are familiar with agricultural work. *In other words, it would be well if the scheme were devised so as to attract back to the land the many thousands of farm workers now in the army, rather than for the purpose of training or attempting to train a new race of rural workers.*

That, I am convinced, is one of the first essentials for the success of the Home-Colonisation Scheme.

Equally necessary is it that the scheme should not be burdened, at the outset, by a heavy financial incubus—but in view of the ultrapatriotic spirit displayed by the owners of the land during the past few months, that should be a comparatively simple matter.

## The Scottish Review

There has been much talk recently of the "conscription" of human life; in the mob of arm-chair dictators, newspaper-demagogues, and pot-house politicians which hustled a weak-kneed Ministry into the arms of the compulsionists, the English squire and the Scottish laird were conspicuous. Their raucous tones could be heard even above the asinine roar of the masquerading "lions" of Carmelite House and Printing House Square. It was an English landowner who persuaded the Prime Minister to give the foolish pledge which enabled the militarists to secure the insertion of the thin edge of the conscription wedge. That wedge will be driven home some day. When the Prime Minister weakly yielded, there was witnessed one of those amazing exhibitions which can scarcely fail to give the cynic cause to jeer. Middle-aged and grey-haired owners of the land—who never did an honest day's work in their lives—journalistic agitators, utterly useless themselves as fighting men in the hour of their country's need, physical weaklings at whom the recruiting sergeant would never look twice—all these joined in the noisy clamour for compulsion—in the demand that better men than themselves should be compelled to fill a place in the trenches which the agitators were disqualified by age and physical unfitness from occupying. The amazing feature of the conscription campaign is that the most prominent advocates of compulsion in the press have been men who have resolutely kept the whole breadth of the Channel between themselves and the firing line when there was real work to be done. For them the safer bar-parlour campaign and the reflected glory

## Land Settlement after the War

that may be won by killing the Germans with their mouths. But the English Government has, for good or evil, accepted the principle of compulsion, and there is no logical reason why they should stop at the conscription of human life. Why not conscription of property? If Lord Derby and the compulsionists are justified in demanding, in the interests of the State, the lives of thousands of young lads who had no part in the making of the war, and no responsibility whatever for the tragic bungling of the diplomats—may not one in the same patriotic spirit, and with a great deal more fairness and justice, demand the conscription of as much of the land of Lord Derby and the other territorial magnates, as will maintain in tolerable comfort the soldier-lads who are broken in the wars? Or are the deer-forests and sporting sanctuaries more sacred than the lives of the thousands of labourers and artisans who have been sacrificed during this debauchery of blood? Why is it that the man who will claim the right to "conscript" his neighbours' life—his neighbour's soul and conscience too—will fight for his own shekels like a she-wolf for her cubs, when it is suggested that the principle of conscription might be applied to land as well as to human life?

Whatever answer one gives to these questions, it is obvious that the land necessary for the small-holdings must be acquired compulsorily, and that no excuse should be given for the landowners to demand extortionate terms from the State. Readers who are familiar with the history of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Act, 1911, and of the serious effect of the House of Lords' decision in the Lindean case, do not

## The Scottish Review

require to be reminded of the vital importance of this aspect of the question. It is no exaggeration to say that the Lindean decision has rendered the economic working of the present Scottish Act a practical impossibility—has indeed, reduced it to impotence. As may be remembered, the Scottish Act provides that where small-holdings are set up under the compulsory powers provided, compensation must be paid to the landowner, not only for loss of rent, if any, but for depreciation in the selling value of the estate due to the existence of the small-holdings on the property. In the Lindean case, where fourteen small-holdings were set up, the compensation awarded by the arbiter, under the latter head, amounted to £3850. The total sum paid to the landowner for disturbance is thus £8488. In addition to this he will receive in future an annual fair rent from the small-holders of £343 1/- That is the cost to the nation of establishing fourteen small-holders on a farm formerly worked by a tenant farmer and eight or nine hired labourers. In the notorious South Uist case, Lady Gordon Cathcart was awarded £13,000 as compensation for the injury that may be done to her property by the conversion of three farms in the island into small-holdings. In this case a substantial part of the award was given on the ground that the sporting value of the estate would be deteriorated by the creation of small-holdings. South Uist, in the felicitous language of the arbiter, had become a sanctuary for wild geese, and before the crofters would be permitted to set foot upon it—and augment the country's wealth by the production of bread bullets—the people of Scotland had to pay a

## Land Settlement after the War

heavy toll to the owner of the game. There is ample room in this respect for the application of the principle of "conscription" to the vast sporting preserves of Scotland. Certainly if the settlement of discharged soldiers on the land is carried out on the profligate plan with which we have been familiar under the Scottish Small-holdings Act, the modest £2,000,000 suggested by the Verney Committee will not even touch the fringe of the problem, while even if the sum were substantially augmented, the only people likely to profit by the transaction would be the land-owners of Scotland and England.

Yet another matter must be kept carefully in view in considering the details of land-settlement. It is essential that any scheme which may be devised should be capable of gradual expansion—that it should fit in with any larger plan of land reform that may be subsequently adopted. This is particularly necessary in Scotland where the land problem is one of the most vital and urgent of many questions with which the nation is confronted. In Scotland, moreover, the "colony" must take a different form from that which is suggested for the rural districts of England. There are, no doubt, many fertile vales in Scotland where fruit-growing, market-gardening, and poultry-farming could be profitably carried on by soldier-settlers. But the scheme of land-settlement best adapted to Scotland is one which combines small-holdings with forestry. One lesson which the war has taught us is that it is just as important to "grow more wood" as to "grow more food." Mr. Robert Galloway, S.S.C., stated at the annual meeting of the Scottish

## The Scottish Review

Arboricultural Society, held in Edinburgh on February 5th of this year, that "if thirty years ago 100,000 acres had been planted annually at a cost of half-a-million a year, to-day we should not have required one stick of pit-wood from abroad. The whole of the capital outlay of thirty years would probably have been repaid within the next three years." There is ample scope in Scotland for an extensive scheme of afforestation in combination with land settlement. Only by a bold and statesmanlike reform on these lines will it be possible to repeople the desolate glens of the north.

More than once the importance of combining afforestation and small-holdings as the basis of a scheme of land settlement has been pointed out by writers in *The Scottish Review*, but in view of the prominence given to the colonisation proposals it may be permissible to repeat two brief passages from the Transactions of the Royal Scottish Arboricultural Society (Vol. xxvii.) quoted by the Rev. Innes Logan, in an article on "Land and Trees" which appeared in these pages in Autumn, 1914. Mr. Logan was referring to the tour through the Highlands of a number of foreign delegates, experts in forestry. At the end of their tour, the foreign experts framed the following resolution :—"From what we have had the opportunity of seeing of the soils and woodlands of Scotland, and from what is known of the climate and conditions, we are of opinion that the country lends itself admirably to afforestation. Under such natural conditions, afforestation can be undertaken on a large scale, and we think that the Society should receive that active

## Land Settlement after the War

support of the nation which is necessary to bring this about." M. Raimer, Russia, declared that he had never seen anywhere so suitable a climate for woodlands as they had in Scotland. "Every day they should thank the Lord for having given them such a country."

In November of the previous year, Mr. G. P. Gordon thus concisely put the matter before the Secretary for Scotland :—"The contrast between one of our Highland glens and a glen in the Highlands of Europe is very marked indeed. We have in our typical Highland glen a stretch generally of indifferent pasture, with perhaps a dozen shepherds' cottages scattered through it. A similar Continental glen supports a vigorous population of small-holders. We find that it is the forest which maintains this population. It is thus not due to any greater advantage, either of soil or climate. I make that statement with detailed agricultural knowledge of the conditions of both countries—Germany and Scotland. The nature of forest employment is specially well adapted to keep people on the land." Mr. Gordon, adds Mr. Logan, then pointed out that this was so because it is (1), permanent ; (2) varied, offering wide scope to capacity and interest, *e.g.* sawmilling, wood-cutting, wood-carving, road-making ; (3) workable alongside other industries, for instance it demands more labour in the dead months of winter. To take an example—a forest of 10,000 acres, with 3000 acres occupied by small-holders supports 1500 people. In the Highlands of Scotland such an area supports 300 at the outside. In Germany, 81 per cent. of those employed in forestry

## The Scottish Review

are small-holders. "*Forestry is the backbone of an economic system of small-holdings.*"

Thus by an array of facts and convincing logic, Mr. Gordon impressed on the attention of the Secretary for Scotland some neglected aspects of national economy. The discharge of thousands of Scottish soldiers will offer a unique opportunity of putting these principles into practical operation. Why should not a pioneer colony for ex-soldiers be set up in some suitable Highland area where the men would be able to supplement the modest profits of their small-holdings by work in the forests? It is only by this combination that an economic system of small-holdings can possibly be established in the Highlands. Moreover, many of the lighter branches of forestry work are much more suitable for war-worn men than the heavy arduous "darg" of the farm labourer.

The re-colonisation of the Highlands on the lines suggested demands, it is true, a wider organisation than is contemplated in the Verney report. The scheme must be based on the principle that the land of Scotland ought to belong to the people of Scotland. Only thus will it be possible to avoid the extortions of the "rent barons," as Ruskin terms them. It is urgently necessary, too, that the control of the scheme should not be allowed to fall into the hands of the County Councils—the most reactionary and Conservative public bodies in the whole of broad Scotland—and that the task of resettlement should be undertaken rather by bodies appointed for that specific purpose, preferably on the lines of the Celtic provincial scheme. This is essentially a matter for the people of Scotland, and the

## Land Settlement after the War

greater the element of national and democratic control in resettlement of the Highlands, the brighter are the prospects of success.

The necessity for promoting rural co-operative societies as an integral part of the land settlement scheme is being wisely insisted on, and in Scotland the machinery of this purpose is already in existence. The Scottish Agricultural Organisation Society has done excellent work in this direction, and in the successful establishment of soldier-settlers on the land a carefully thought-out scheme of co-operative organisation is essential.

The scheme thus outlined is necessarily a big one. It involves, indeed, a complete revolution in the land system of Scotland. The establishment of a pioneer-colony in the Highlands would, however, be an important step forward—a step in the right direction. It would be a beginning of the greater scheme for the re-colonisation of the desolate glens of the north. That is the task that awaits the people of Scotland when the great struggle on the Continent is over. A new battle must be waged when our gallant lads return from the front—a battle against old abuses, against the forces of Caesarism and reaction at home, a battle to secure for the people of Scotland the control of their own destinies, to conquer the land for the people, and to make this grand old land of ours a free and independent nation.

WILLIAM DIACK.

## *Solvitur Risu*

"It pleases ye to be fleepant," said McLeod sourly,  
"an' there is a time for a' things. This is  
no the time for light-mindedness."

"We'd better take it smiling," replied the English-  
man. "There 'll be plenty of time for the  
other thing."

Mary Gaunt—*The Ends of the Earth.*

 It was Tuesday, the 2nd of November, 1915—a murky afternoon. The mist rising up from the Thames and smoke lowering down from countless chimney-pots wove about Westminster a fine crape of funereal gloom—the heavens of England, one could have imagined, gone into mourning out of sympathy with her.

The War had just entered upon its sixteenth month, and had already exacted sacrifices unparalleled in English history. These realms — hitherto utter strangers to military burdens—had improvised an army of three million men, each of whom cost between £250 and £300 a year; a sum sufficient to keep a respectable family in comfort. The total outlay had reached the fabulous figure of £1,600,000,000 a year, in place of the ordinary annual expenditure of about £200,000,000. Taxes were piled up as they had not been for a hundred years. Prices of commodities at home were rising, and the national credit abroad was sinking. The means of production had shrunk

## *Solvitur Risu*

to such a degree that imports from foreign countries exceeded exports by more than £30,000,000 a month. Rich people were forced to give up luxuries which, through long use, had become necessities to them ; poor people were beginning to feel the pinch of privation; and, the highest financial authorities declared, enormous as the load already was, there was a great deal more to be added to it.

Of that other load, who can speak in terms of arithmetic ? Day after day the newspapers came out black with lists of the dead—interminable columns of cold print enumerating the thousands of young warm lives that perished on land or sea ; and week after week the streets were saddened by processions of the wounded and the maimed, the sick and the blind. All over the Empire mothers mourned the loss of their sons, wives of their husbands, children of their fathers ; and myriads of gay homes had been made desolate as if by a sudden blast of a devastating plague.

And the return for this lavish expenditure of treasure and tears ? Of the western theatre of operations, which had absorbed by far the larger part of the English forces, the best that could be said was that the enemy had not advanced. In the eastern theatre there were progressive retreats. Ever since June, the Russian "steam-roller" had been rolling backwards—much more rapidly than it had rolled forwards. The falls of Warsaw, Ivangorod, and Kovno followed with a fatal swiftness the falls of Przemysl and Lemberg, and were followed in their turn by the falls of Georgievsk, Brest Litovsk, Grodno, Vilna. Even more tragic was the position on the southern side.

## The Scottish Review

The attempt to force the Dardanelles was now acknowledged, even by official geniuses, to be what had long appeared to humbler intellects—a ghastly fiasco. The adventure had cost twice as many casualties as the whole of the South African War, and of tangible gain there was not even the shadow of a chance. The Gallipoli Peninsula had become a trap of destiny—advance and retreat seemed equally impossible ; and in that grave of hapless heroes lay also sepulchred the prestige of English strategy. As a result of this calamity Englishmen had to witness another close by. Their gallant Servian allies, attacked simultaneously from north and east, and unsupported by those who had pledged their honour to defend them with all their power ("without reserve and without qualification") were falling back decimated, leaving town after town in the hands of their foes. The wretched little nation, in its desperate plight, cried to England for help with its failing breath—and cried in vain. Considerations of honour apart, the Servian catastrophe possessed, for discerning Englishmen, a more sinister significance. It marked the first step in that eastward march which the enemy had often proclaimed as one of his main objects—the march towards Egypt, Persia, Afghanistan, and India—a direct blow aimed at the most vulnerable part of the British Empire.

Small wonder that the buoyant optimism with which England had embarked upon the war had given place to gloomy doubt. Small wonder that the faith of the nation in its rulers' capacity to organise victory was shaken. Every one of their prophecies of success had been falsified by experience—event had come

## *Solvitur Risu*

rushing after event with a relentless regularity, to prove them wrong in every calculation. The clumsy contrivances by means of which they strove to hide the truth from the people had only one effect—to intensify the people's suspicion. The country would no longer "wait and see." It had waited long enough—it now wanted to see. The Press demanded much plainer speaking about the War from the Premier. In Parliament there were numerous questions down for him to answer. A convenient illness had spared Mr. Asquith the embarrassment of answering for a time. But at last he had announced his intention to make a statement on Tuesday, the 2nd of November, 1915.

Under such circumstances of national distress, distrust, and sick anxiety, the House of Commons met that murky November afternoon.

The attendance was worthy of the occasion. All benches were crowded, members sitting on the gangway steps and on the dais of the Speaker's chair. Up above, the Peers' Gallery was packed with lords, temporal and spiritual—Strangers' Gallery *ditto*—Press Gallery *ditto, ditto*. Seldom had the House known such congestion. Not less striking than the magnitude of the assembly was its mien. All faces—young, old, and middle-aged—wore a look of tense expectancy. Even hardened Parliamentarians seemed unable to dissemble their interest in the proceedings.

When the Premier rose to his feet, the air throbbed with suppressed excitement. What will he say to the messengers of the Nation?

A very humorous smile wrinkles the corners of Mr.

## The Scottish Review

Asquith's mouth as to this unuttered query he makes ready answer :

" I am afraid I am doomed to disappoint many expectations, but not least the expectations of those of my many advisers who seem to think that it is my duty to appear here to-day in the guise either of a criminal in the dock making the best defence he can of a somewhat doubtful past—(*laughter*)—or even of a white-sheeted penitent with a couple of candles, one in each hand, doing penance and asking for absolution. (*Laughter*). I do not propose to adopt either the one attitude or the other." (*Laughter and loud cheers*).

Thus spoke the statesman upon whose shoulders lay the weight of the British Empire—the leader of four hundred millions of human beings, at a most solemn moment in their history. You would have thought you listened to a genial host addressing a dinner party, a festal gathering got together to celebrate some happy family event. For two whole hours he went on, with a fluency and vivacity that never flagged. Complacency radiated from his face, persuasion dripped from his tongue. Failures had befallen our arms ; but then look at our wonderful Navy. " Has there been anything comparable to it in history ? " (*Cheers*). " Some parts of the horizon were overcast," but people should cultivate " a proper sense of perspective." Dissensions in the Cabinet ? Most of the rumours to that effect were lies—gross perversions of the truth. " There has been a difference of opinion"—that is all. (*Laughter*). For all the mistakes of the past he had a plausible explanation ; for all the deficiencies

## *Solvitur Risu*

of the present he had a sure remedy ; and he never forgot to temper rhetorical platitude with ponderous pleasantry.

The messengers of the English Nation never got such a lecture on optimism ; and the effect on them was most exhilarating. If they had come prepared to lament and to condemn, they stayed to laugh and to cheer. Until the House broke up a little before midnight, its walls re-echoed with alternate laughter and cheers. And the papers the next morning reported that at one stage of the debate Mr. Asquith and a prominent member of his Cabinet were seen "rocking with laughter."

A Scottish poet of my acquaintance was mightily scandalised by these displays of English risibility. That the Prime Minister of England should be seen rocking with laughter at such a time was to my friend a thing so shocking that he could hardly speak of it in prose. How could any decent man laugh while the world was bleeding to death ? We were faced with the most harrowing spectacle that humanity had ever witnessed—a tragedy so vast that the imagination fainted before it. The mere effort to visualise the volume of wretchedness was enough to drive one mad. The most callous heart sank with dismay at the thought of the immeasurable woe around us. Yet the Prime Minister of England was "rocking with laughter" ! The only parallel he could think of was Nero fiddling while Rome burnt.

Although no poet, I entirely agreed with my friend.

## The Scottish Review

We all love laughter, but not at a funeral. Even to one schooled to life's endless ironies, a flippant Premier at such a time was rather more depressing than a funny undertaker.

But we must be just. To my ingenuous friend's mind, Mr. Asquith was comparable to Nero. This seems unfair both to Mr. Asquith and to Nero. The English Premier is not an Imperial freak of nature. Not even his warmest admirers have ever credited him with conspicuous originality. He is the normal product of his environment. Consciously or not, he reflects the spirit of the society in which he moves and breathes and has his being. The applause that greeted his elaborate pleasantries showed how well attuned he was to his audience. The House of Commons evidently found in his speech the quality it prizes most in those who have the privilege of addressing it. An English statesman may lack all sorts of other merits with impunity, but want of humour—"humour" is one of the great words in the English language—constitutes an unforgivable sin. No matter how serious the subject under discussion may be, the orator who wishes to hold the ear of the House must make it laugh.

Two instances will suffice.

A few weeks earlier a certain Member had made himself immensely popular by telling a humorous story to illustrate the scandalous waste of public money that went on in connection with the War Office contracts. The House roared with merriment. Everybody with one accord said what a delightful gem it was, and praised the happy *raconteur*. By bestowing

## *Solvitur Risu*

nothing he acquired fame. As to the matter in hand, Mr. Asquith promised that an enquiry should be held.

A few weeks later—when fresh failures and losses had come to deepen the dark tints of the horizon—the House “indulged” (the phrase is not mine) in an all-night sitting. It met this time not to contemplate incompetence screened behind a specious name, but to discuss the Government’s demand for a supplementary estimate for one million additional soldiers. It was an occasion that, to the ordinary intelligence, did not seem particularly favourable for lively sallies of Parliamentary wit. For the sonorous snores which accompanied the deliberations there was some excuse—*Opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.* Though not “in order,” they were in nature. But who could have imagined that senators engaged on a task of this kind should have found in it food for mirth? Yet such proved to be the case. “Several amusing incidents” (as the reporters did not fail to note) relieved the tedium of the night-long debate; and finally, at half-past five in the morning, the vote was agreed to “amid laughter.”

So indispensable has jocosity become to political success in England that a reporter who favours an honourable member can render him no greater service than to insert in his report as many parenthetical paroxysms of “Laughter” as space permits. It is not, of course, necessary that those outbursts of mirth should have actually taken place. Instances are even known of speeches which by some misadventure (such as the would-be orator’s failure to catch the Speaker’s eye) were never delivered in Parliament,

## The Scottish Review

appearing in the Press abundantly besprinkled with "loud laughter." In brief, it may be stated as a general proposition which no candid politician (if such a person exists) will venture to contradict, that a reputation for wit is a far more effective passport to Parliamentary distinction than a reputation for wisdom. Wagging carries all before it; and the feeblest of feeble jokes is valued more highly at Westminster than the weightiest argument.

The House of Commons is not exacting. There is nothing fastidious or hypercritical about its attitude towards the comic. In truth, judging by the things which stir honourable members to hilarity, one is compelled to the conclusion that their sense of the ludicrous can scarcely be subtler than that of the average schoolboy. Rarely, if ever, is it possible to detect any deviation from that standard. A bit of mimicry, a *double entente*, a mild malapropism, and the whole assembly gives itself up to uncontrollable convulsions. Once or twice a wag has sent the House into hysterics by crowing like a cock. Unintentional mistakes or mishaps of the most trivial order—an orator knocking over a glass of water, or sitting down on his hat—are equally provocative of mirth. In the absence of any of these stimulants, mere eccentricity of manner, attitude, or attire suffices to shake every diaphragm. Where other grown-up people would smile, English legislators roar.

Whence this monumental puerility?

One explanation suggested by an observer of many years' experience is that the House of Commons gets so profoundly bored with its own incessant babble

## *Solvitur Risu*

that it clutches with feverish haste at anything that will permit it to laugh. Another explanation that has sometimes occurred to the present writer is that its members have so exaggerated an opinion of each other's essential dulness that the least evidence of the opposite quality surprises them into inordinate appreciation. In addition, there is that sympathetic force which intensifies the emotional capacities of all crowds to be taken into account. Perhaps contact with one another fires honourable members to collective feats of imbecility they could hardly perform alone. However that may be, such is the spirit of England's legislative assembly, and statesmen in adapting themselves to it simply obey a sound instinct of self-preservation.

How cheap these English law-makers must seem to some of the foreign envoys who gaze upon them from their gallery—these politicians who bring the levity of the dinner-table into state affairs! Poor frivolous creatures masquerading as senators! Elsewhere, such men usually take to the music-hall stage, and become licensed buffoons; it is only in England that they take to politics.

But, whatever judgment may be passed on the English Parliament, it must be shared by accomplices outside its precincts. A disappointed Press has lately denounced the futility of the House of Commons. It would have been more wisely employed had it selected as the object of its indignation a far greater culprit. The House of Commons cannot, in common fairness, be treated as an isolated body. It forms but part of a whole, and partakes of the qualities which

## The Scottish Review

pervade that whole. Why denounce this limited company of sorry comedians? Think rather of the people who choose them—of the people who pay them four hundred a year to play the fool. For, true to its democratic composition, the House of Commons does, in its sense of fitness, if in no other sense, faithfully represent the people of these realms. The proof thereof lies on the surface. Nero's fiddling has been recorded by contemporary chroniclers with scorn and execration. Mr. Asquith's "rocking with laughter" was reported in the English newspapers as a mere feature of the scene, and was accepted as such by the newspaper-reading public. Nobody, save that Scottish poet, saw in it matter for reprobation. Nobody condemned or censured the Chief Minister of the Crown for his conduct. That such conduct should have passed uncensured and uncondemned by press and public alike was to the impartial spectator of current conditions a circumstance more deplorably significant than the fact itself. It proved, as nothing else could, that if the English Premier reflects the spirit of the English Parliament, the Parliament reflects the spirit of the Nation.

Montaigne once sneered at the English for taking their pleasures sadly. The gibe, whatever truth it may have contained in the critic's day, has long since lost its point. At the present day it would be hard to find in Europe a nation which excels the English in lightmindedness. We all know that Englishmen can buy and sell. Nobody doubts their capacity for making calico. But the world has not yet realised

## *Solvitur Risu*

how generously the money earned in the shop is spent on pure amusement—amusement so disinterested that it yields not, and is not intended to yield, a farthing of profit, mental or moral.

Of all stages in the habitable globe the English is the least infected by serious drama. It is almost entirely devoted to the production of pieces, which, as they are not tragedies, must be comedies. To produce a play that makes any demand on the head or the heart has become a sort of evidence that the producer suffers from suicidal mania. An English audience does not go to the theatre to think, or to feel, but only to laugh. The dramatist is regarded as a humble adjutant of the cook ; and his function is to promote by his art the assimilation of the other's stodgy concoctions. Likewise as regards literature. The most widely patronised writers in England are the purveyors of light, crisp, easily digestible fiction. Any book above the level of a Continental infant's assimilative capacity is considered a bore. A German appraises authors according to their depth of thought ; a Frenchman according to their beauty of expression. John Bull has no more use for style than he has for ideas. His one test of a work of the imagination is, " Does it amuse ? " and his highest praise for a history is that he has found it " as entertaining as a novel."

Nor is the rule otherwise for real life. The ability to entertain has come to be the supreme criterion of excellence in every field of activity, public or private. Everyone is familiar with the jesting judge—he is as common a figure in modern England as the circus

## The Scottish Review

clown was in centuries gone by, with the result that an English law-court nowadays provides for the idle poor cheaper amusement than any third-rate music hall. Like theatrical performances and Parliamentary debates, judicial proceedings are constantly enlivened by explosions of boisterous laughter ; and many a man goes to jail, if not rejoicing, at least carrying with him the pleasant memory of a magisterial jest. Indeed, the frequent reappearance of the same persons in the dock almost suggests that some of them commit a crime purposely to enjoy the pun which often accompanies the punishment.

Scarcely less notable is the flippancy of the gentlemen who represent the Majesty of England in other Courts. With them also persiflage is another name for good form ; the English diplomatist who lives up to the best ideals of his profession would infinitely sooner break every one of the ten commandments than betray himself into unseemly earnestness. For him there is no god but the Grinning God, and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs His High Priest. Whosoever believes in seriousness, he treats with lofty scorn, as an underbred *bourgeois*. It is perhaps unnecessary to add the professorial class-room with its recondite funniments. The only English institution which has not yet been invaded by the spirit of frivolity is the Church. Such humour as emanates from the pulpit still is of the unconscious order. With this solitary exception, wherever you go, you find that, if the Englishman of Montaigne's day took his pleasures sadly, his descendants have more than redressed the balance by taking their business gaily.

## *Solvitur Risu*

No class of the community seems lacking in this national gift for laughter. One touch of lightmindedness appears to make all Englishmen kin. Mention has already been made of the War Office Contracts, and of the way in which the revelation of the scandal was received by the House of Commons. Precisely similar was the reception it met with in the City of London. Among merchants and manufacturers who had dealings with the War Office the capping of contract experiences became a fashionable pastime. Every one had his own private little story—sometimes half-a-dozen ; and no one expressed anything but amusement in listening to them. And lest it should be said that a rich nation can afford to laugh at the waste of mere money, we have the spectacle of military officers discussing in their clubs some of the most terrible disasters that overtook their comrades in the same spirit—"Have you heard the latest about the Loos affair ? It's damn funny—" The remainder is lost in inextinguishable laughter.

Laugh if you are wise, said the ancient satirist. True, true enough—if you are wise after the manner of Diogenes ; if you are content with eleemosynary carrots for dinner, and for your house a tub. But if your wisdom is of this world—as unquestionably six days in the week it is—then know that it is utterly incompatible with the philosophy of laughter. Aphrodite is a charming, amiable deity—a thousand times pleasanter than stern Athene ; but hers is not the worship to win victory in war or prosperity in peace.

## The Scottish Review

England has tried both cults; and the results of either are recorded in her history, for all who care to read and ponder. During the short rule of the grim Protector all foreign powers trembled at the name of England. During the reign of the merry monarch the Dutch fleet sailed up the Thames and burnt the ships of war that lay at Chatham. The contrast is worth reflecting on.

Another thing equally worth reflection is a certain disquieting correspondence between the conduct of England's present rulers and that of the persons who ruled what time the Dutch made a bonfire of the English fleet. On the very day of that great national humiliation King Charles feasted with the ladies of his seraglio, and amused himself with hunting a moth about the supper room. The state of mind indicated by such action would have been incredible to us, had we not the example of Mr. Asquith jesting with the gentlemen of his Cabinet and rocking with laughter at a moment of national mourning. The difference between the present and the past is that, while the levity of Charles was confined to his own circle, the levity of Asquith ramifies through the length and the breadth of the land. It is as though the contemporaries of the decadent Stuarts had bequeathed to their posterity their rotten spirit. From that date each generation seems to have regularly improved upon the frivolity of the preceding one, and to have taken care to transmit it pure and enlarged into the bosom of its successor, so that now, instead of one, we have millions of moth-hunting Charleses—chaffing, capering, fatuously cackling harlequins. The whole tone and tenor of English life is affected by this Caroline

## *Solvitur Risu*

spirit ; it is the genius which meets the Englishman at his birth, acts as his inseparable companion throughout his career, provides the sauce which pampers his appetite, and the drug that sends him to sleep—which teaches him to discover humour in all things, and impels him to go on laughing until he is laid where he can laugh no more.

No doubt, in all things human, there is an element of comedy. But if we refuse to take seriously the things upon which our safety—nay, our very existence as a nation—depends, what, in the name of sanity, shall we ever take seriously ? To the devil with this everlasting prattle about humour ! How can you work and play at the same time ? Is it possible to dig and plant with kid gloves on ? Will all the barrels of scented water that ever came out of Cologne sweeten one foul sewer ?

The exhibitions of mirth we have been contemplating are no evidence of humour in any sane acceptation of the word. They are examples of crass insensibility—symptoms of a want of perception or of feeling fraught with incalculable mischief ; it stifles righteous indignation, it fosters a habit of languid acquiescence in abuses, it extinguishes all zeal for progress, it creates an atmosphere in which every noble aspiration withers, and fraud prospers at the expense of honesty.

PHILAETHES.

## *Nationalism and National Antagonism*

### 1.—NATIONALISM.



THE common belief that Europe knew little of the sentiment of nationality before the latter half of the fifteenth century is one that stands in need of considerable modification. Large assertions of this character are as a rule a deal more plausible than true. As mere generalisations they may have their uses for historical purposes, but when we descend to particulars it will be found that, in a great many cases, they are only partially and superficially correct, and so are apt to be very misleading.

The "Middle" or "Dark Ages" are a case in point. Historical opinion is greatly divided as to these. Hallam in his literary *Introduction* maintains that the latter were never as black as they have often been painted. Other historians find themselves unable to determine when the Middle Ages began, and when, precisely, they came to a close. Opinion in regard to historical episodes which are plainly the result of pre-existing causes of a more or less complex nature, must necessarily always suffer from this kind of

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

uncertainty. An exceptionally bad harvest may precipitate a Reform Bill. The writing of a book may bring about a Renaissance, or an act of defiance on the part of a single individual may draw religious ferment to a head ; but all such overt signs and portents are not to be regarded otherwise than as so many links in so many chains of pre-existing human thought and endeavour. History has no beginning, because we do not know how, or when, the faculty of human thought first arose.

It is plain, therefore, that when we come across such a statement as the following : "The Middle Ages knew little or nothing of the sentiment of nationality which is so powerful a factor in modern Europe,"\* we are face to face with one of those plausible historical generalisations of which I have already spoken in not too commendatory terms. Without having recourse to Classical antiquity, it would be easy to prove that the above is an assertion susceptible to very considerable modifications. The campaigns of Wallace and Bruce, and the battle of Bannockburn, were, surely, efforts inspired by a national sentiment. The early duchies of Germany, such as Saxony, Franconia, Bavaria, Swabia, etc., were decidedly strong in national sentiment, and if it is true that Roman imperialism tended to obliterate national distinctions, and to disregard national feeling, we are to remember that such a state of affairs was brought about in defiance of a general sentiment in favour of nationalism. The birth of the psychological cause of imperialism is coeval

\* Grant's *History of Europe*, an excellent hand-book, by the way.

## The Scottish Review

with the rise of the concept that runs counter to it. The former is plainly based on man's tendency to usurp on his fellow-men, and to exploit the herd in the interests of his own particular concerns. But the contrary sentiment or principle is just as old, e.g. man's tendency to resist exploitation at the hands of particular men, interests, or groups of individuals, and to fight for his own and his family's right to that which, legitimately or otherwise, he regards as his peculiar and proper possession. And though the two sentiments with which we are here dealing are coeval, yet it is plain that as regards the ideals and institutions to which they have respectively given rise—among which are nationalism on the one hand, and imperialism on the other—the first is entitled to take precedence, in a point of time, over the second. For as—to use a convenient simile, which I sincerely hope no one will consider offensive—no man can well set up for a robber, unless there already exist goods and possessions that are worth stealing from others, so should it be reasonably plain that a world without kingdoms and principalities to conquer would be but a barren and useless void, so far as the imperial concept is concerned.

It is plain, therefore, that when we are told that the "Middle Ages knew little or nothing of the sentiment of nationality" we are not to ascribe that fact—if fact it be—to the then ignorance of Europe touching the concept of nationalism. Probably, our historian's generalisation merely means that the Europe of the period to which his remarks apply was dominated by ideas that took their rise from the phenomenon of Roman imperialism. He means to say that, during

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

the Middle Ages, nationalism was out of vogue. The rule of Rome had temporarily crushed it. But though that be, in a measure, true, yet there can be no doubt whatever touching its previous existence. The speech put by Tacitus into the mouth of Galgacus may be, and probably is, apocryphal ; but that great historian would hardly have attributed such a speech to such a man had he not been familiar with the principal motive that inspired the Caledonian resistance. That lieutenant of Vespasian who sought to reconcile the Gauls to the Roman yoke by assuring them that, though they had lost their national independence, yet they should reflect that, in its stead, they had acquired the name and privileges of Roman citizens, was plainly not unacquainted with this universal sentiment, and with the strength of its appeal to the human mind. It is probable that Vercingetorix's "rebellion" against Roman rule was, as Caesar affirms, inspired by mixed motives ; but it is not a little significant that his appeal was mainly addressed to the patriotism of the Gauls. He implored his fellow-countrymen not to allow their nationality to be extinguished by the arms of the Romans. It is not to be believed for a moment that he would have done that, had he not been persuaded in his own mind either of the essential justness and propriety of such an appeal, or of the policy of couching it in the terms which he actually employed. In any event, it is surely hardly necessary to continue to labour this point. History, both new and old, "authentic" and otherwise, supplies us with so many and striking evidences of the early diffusion and power

## The Scottish Review

of the national sentiment that that man must, indeed, be wilfully blind who sees nothing in the testimony presented by so vast and brilliant a cloud of witnesses.

But though the national principle itself is as old as the first appearance of those groups of individuals which answer, more or less exactly, to our conceptions of what constitutes a nation, yet the sentiment of nationality, or rather the general recognition of the principles on which that feeling is founded, is clearly a product of very slow growth. The right of what is called "Private Judgment" is commonly referred to the Renaissance for its originals; but this, again, is only a half-truth. That right certainly existed in Classic times, and though the decay and destruction of the Roman empire caused it to lie dormant in Europe for many long years, yet those are justified who seek to link it up with the speculative thought of the ancient world. Moreover, it is incumbent on us to remember that this right of Private Judgment—to which so much importance is nowadays properly attached—resembles, in at least one important particular, the analogous right of nations to manage their own affairs, inasmuch as the growth of both rights has been subjected to innumerable crosses and interruptions, and has been, if not extraordinarily slow, at all events painfully leisurely. It is true that the right of Private Judgment has sped quicker, and diffused itself farther afield, than has, hitherto, the analogous right of nations to independence and the exclusive management of their own affairs. But this apparently is but in accordance with that Divine scheme or plan by virtue of which the sociological "unit," from which springs everything

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

that constitutes the world outside and beyond it, is, not the community, but the individual. It was the individual that first laid hold on the right of Private Judgment, which, later, was communicated to the community; and it is undoubtedly to personal freedom, and to love of independence, and to the sense of responsibility generated in the individual by that state that we owe the uplifting of the nations, and their passionate determination to preserve the management of their national affairs in their own hands—a sentiment which we call Nationalism.

Toleration and liberty of conscience are principles of admittedly very slow growth. There are to this day countries in Europe in which the right of Private Judgment is but grudgingly conceded, if not positively denied. Traces of the reverse of those principles are still to be found in the United Kingdoms, though their peoples are accustomed to pride themselves on their immunity from any such remnants of more illiberal times. A perfect toleration, embracing every walk of life, and every species of religious and political creed and thought, has yet to be declared. But it is remarkable that whilst progress in the direction indicated by these remarks has undoubtedly been great, if tardy, since the new world was linked up with the old by means of the revival of learning in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the same ratio of progress has by no means been observed in respect to the growth and diffusion of that analogous principle by which is conferred on each and every nation the right of Private Judgment as regards the management of its own affairs, and (humanly speaking) the conduct of its own destiny.

## The Scottish Review

The religious reformers of the sixteenth century were fond of pointing to the Renaissance, or the revival of classical learning in Europe, as the fount from which they drew their remedial measures. That movement undoubtedly considerably facilitated their labours, but it is to be remarked that the reformers themselves had very imperfect notions touching toleration and liberty of conscience, though one or two not of that party who were generally suspected of having leanings that way—such as Maximilian of Austria—publicly proclaimed the most liberal sentiments. It is but a truism to say that the right of Private Judgment, which the reformers so eagerly claimed for themselves, was the very last thing which they were prepared to concede to others. "As to the privileges of free inquiry," says Hallam, "it was of course exercised by those who deserted their ancient altars, but certainly not upon any latitudinarian theory of a right to judge amiss." This surely is a very "mild" way of stating a notorious and a very disagreeable fact. Servetus was cruelly done to death at the stake, merely because his religious opinions were not of the same complexion with those embraced by Calvin; and the polemics of the period, according as they are discovered in the writings of Luther, Scaliger, Erasmus, etc., speak volumes as to that intolerant zeal, and those illiberal notions, by which the leading reformers were animated.

But whilst I have no desire to press too closely the analogy which I have ventured to draw between the revival of learning and the recrudescence of nationalism—both which suffered so many discouragements at the hands of the Middle Ages—I beg leave to remark that

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

much the same difficulties and obstacles encountered the diffusion of the one as hampered and retarded the progress of the other, though, in the case of the national concept, not only was the progress uniformly more slow, and the interruptions and crosses much more numerous and serious, but the checks and abuses to which that principle was subjected by those who laid hold on it for their own ends were also infinitely more injurious and grievous. We have already seen that the right of Private Judgment was employed, not to found a general toleration and liberty of conscience, but to promote the interests of particular religious convictions—to ease and secure those men who, having by an exercise of this very right of Private Judgment revolted against the ancient faith of Christendom, should properly have been the first to extend to others not of their way of thinking that liberty of thought which they had so vehemently claimed for themselves, and not only claimed, but exercised to the full. A similar obliquity of judgment and the like inconsistency of conduct characterised the measures of many of those who hastened, urged by motives not altogether disinterested it is to be feared, to subscribe to the principle of nationalism. The recrudescence of this powerful sentiment was eagerly seized on by some of the most ambitious rulers in Europe, who were quick to see in it an easy means of furthering their own designs, under pretexts and pretences more plausible and specious than the pleas and excuses of headlong ambition are wont to consist of. But these men, as those others to whom I have already referred, never designed, or intended, that their adherence to the revived prin-

## The Scottish Review

ciple should be otherwise than agreeable to their own interests—that, in fine, it should extend beyond those limits fixed by a lively concern for their own particular advantage, and the interests (pretended or real), of the counties over which they ruled. Such schemes for the partition of Europe as Henry the Great of France communicated to Elizabeth of England, and the Emperor Charles V. is known to have entertained, were, though ostensibly concerted with a view to its promotion, but so many flagrant violations of, the national principle. By these schemes—and many similar ones have been formed besides those I have named—Europe was to be parcelled out among a few great powers ; “spheres of influence,” to adopt the euphemism of to-day, were to be formed, and the weaker States were to be placed in permanent dependence on the stronger. The theory of the “Balance of Power”—whose original, excluding possible Classical sources, I think we ought to look for in the establishment of the Burgundian monarchy—was also erected in defiance of the national principle. This clumsy device for securing the equilibrium of Europe has caused, by its various oscillations, more bloodshed and misery than even that unbridled lust of dominion which we are apt to ascribe to the tyrants of the East has occasioned in those unhappy parts of the world which have been rendered the scenes of their conquests. The theory of the “Balance,” as that underlying the various Partitions to which I have referred, is founded on injustice, and the refusal, or at all events the sinking of full political rights, as between nation and

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

nation. These schemes or devices represent at their best, so far as their principal projectors and supporters are concerned, nothing but selfish and partial applications of that principle whose mantle they usurped, in order the better to cloak the privileged designs of arbitrary power and "prestige." Perhaps some may be inclined to take a more charitable view of these endeavours, and, influenced by the faith that is in them, describe them as early "gropings towards the light." The painfully slow progress heretofore registered by the growth and diffusion of liberal ideas, conjoined with Europe's frequent relapses from the practice of the principles underlying the Christian religion, would certainly appear to constitute a point in favour of this opinion, were it not that recent experience proves that the ruling powers of modern Europe are almost as little capable of discharging their obligations to principle as their forerunners were, when the national concept was revived.

The history of Europe from the beginning of the Thirty Years' War down to the present time may not improperly be described as a struggle between imperialism and nationalism. The revival of Classical learning undoubtedly tended to encourage and strengthen those imperialistic notions that were conveyed to Europe through the channel of ancient Rome; but, on the other hand, it is equally true to say that the liberal ideas that took their rise from the Renaissance tended to discourage those ideas of absolute power and universal dominion that were the principal fruit which the scheming, the selfish, and the ambitious derived from the study of learned antiquity. Some, if not all, of the

## The Scottish Review

Austrian emperors, dreamed of re-establishing in Europe the power that was Rome; and though the French kings set themselves to oppose this ambition, and waged incessant warfare against it, yet nothing is more sure than they did so with the single intention of supplanting their great rivals in that headship at which the Emperors undoubtedly aimed, and to secure which they directed their utmost energies. Thus, it was from no love of the national principle that the French monarchs made alliances with the independent States of Northern Europe, and fomented as well the Protestantism as the growing nationalism of certain of the German principalities. These countries, and the spirit they stood for, were as repugnant to the rulers of France as ever they were so to those of Austria. The free republics of Italy were finally crushed between the upper and the nether millstones of French ambition and Austrian aggression; and though the title of "Roman Emperor" may have been, as modern historians are fond to affirm, but an "empty one," yet it was eagerly coveted, not so much indeed on account of what its possession entailed by way of material gain, as by reason of the possibilities that were associated in scheming and ambitious minds with its tenure. The theory of the imperial power, at all events as regards the plentitude thereof, may have been, as it is frequently described, a "fiction." But the "Star of Austria" illuminated, at one time, an immense territory; and though it is true to say that the effulgence of those rays was never carried as far as the European bounds embraced by the original Roman Empire, when that institution was at the height

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

of its power, yet he would be a bold man who should affirm that its restoration was at no time practicable, even supposing that Charles V. had been as well supported by his own subjects, not indeed as he deserved to be, but as the immensity and grandeur of his schemes and projects rendered it absolutely necessary (if their success was to be secured), that he should be assisted by those who acknowledged his rule.

The failure of Charles V., the well-nigh total miscarriage of his plans, conjoined with the powerful rivalry of France—these events precipitated that result by virtue of which the national principle or concept was enabled, not indeed to flourish, but to struggle on through an exceptionally stormy period of European history, just as the liberal notions touching the right of Private Judgment, etc., released by the Renaissance, were preserved to Europe, not so much by virtue of the superior moral and intellectual qualities of the reformers themselves, as through the accidental channel of the rivalries and disputes engendered by the revival of learning. In none of the wars that convulsed Christendom from the end of the seventeenth century till the declaration of the independence of Greece in the year 1827, is it possible to discern any conscious effort on the part of the great European States to carry into practice those tenets of liberty and toleration as regards nations to which they had long been accustomed to render lip-service in varying degree. The Greek undertaking was, as Mr. Grant expresses it, "a national rising against a foreign yoke"; and though, years before, the Bohemians and other peoples had attempted similar

## The Scottish Review

things and suffered abominably in consequence, yet was this the first occasion, apparently, on which that strange and fickle entity the "European Conscience" was profoundly moved and effectually stirred. Always unpopular in Europe, it may have been, of course, that the singular result to which I refer should not be ascribed so much to love of the national principle, following on a general searching of hearts among the rulers of Europe, as to wide-spread detestation of the Turk. But, whatever the particular cause may have been that produced the remarkable change of opinion to which I refer, the fact remains that the Greek rising of 1821, and the success to which it was eventually carried, enormously strengthened the hold of the national principle on the slippery conscience of Europe. The rise of modern nationalism really dates from that event. Hitherto it had been but a sickly and a struggling plant, requiring the utmost efforts on the part of those who believed in its potential virtues to shield it from the furious storms of steel and lead which, time after time, swept the surface of that unkindly soil into which it had struck a few uncertain and unstable roots. But the Greek rising, in conjunction with the sacrifices, the heroism, and the idealism, which it called forth, worked a truly striking change in Europe's attitude towards the national principle. "In the nineteenth century (says Mr. Grant) the feeling and the belief grew that all who belonged to the same nation should form a single State, and that each nation should manage its own affairs, and be freed from the domination of any foreign nation." The spectacle of an ancient and highly interesting people "rightly

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

struggling to be free" struck, at long last, a responsive chord in many a heart which, from indifference, ignorance, or self-interest, had hitherto been steeled against the admission of any such edifying and humanising impressions. Doubtless, in the case of those princes who ruled over dependent nations having national rights as well founded as those possessed by the Greeks, these monarchs were quite as unwilling as were the Turks to "let the people go." And though the applause which they showered upon the Greeks was tinctured with hypocrisy, and mixed with a liberal measure of secret dislike, suspicion, and uneasiness, yet is it true to say that—to use the common language of the times—with the emancipation of Hellas, the national principle or concept entered upon a "fresh lease of life."

But though the ancient conflict between imperialism on the one hand and nationalism on the other received, so far as the latter is concerned, a stimulus that was both temporary and enduring, by reason of the battle of Navarino and the settlement to which the Turkish overthrow gave rise, yet do these events, vastly encouraging though they were, constitute but a stage of the long and bitter struggle upon which nationalism has entered with its arch-enemy, imperialism. The national principle, though it has many powerful friends in modern Europe, and has gained enormously in strength and prestige of recent years, is still very far from enjoying that universal rule to which its genius leads it to aspire, and which, sooner or later, it would seem to be destined to acquire. The old Caesarism is by no means yet

## The Scottish Review

entirely laid aside, however much those who secretly adhere to it may seek to cloak their designs and to mask their real intentions with specious professions drawn from the literature of toleration, or with unctions derived from a selfish and illiberal apprehension of the doctrines associated with the rights of nations. If we look narrowly into the conduct of even the professed friends of nationalism—of those who have recently gone somewhat out of their way to declare themselves as combatants on the side of the Angels—we shall certainly find in their case, as in that of those who have not chosen so to distinguish themselves, at all events by public declarations, though they may have sought to do so by inference and innuendo, the time-honoured gulf between theory and practice unpleasantly obtruding itself on our gaze. Indeed, appearances different from these were hardly to be expected under the circumstances in which modern Europe is placed. The rate of moral progress is now, as it has ever been, slow in the extreme, and whilst duly thankful for such alterations and improvements as time has produced in the past, and is even now concerting, in the interests of the national principle, the wise will not allow themselves to be deceived by professions which—even if sincere—cannot possibly be translated into action without a radical change of political faith on the part of those who indulge in them. The European friends of nationalism, therefore, would do well to expect of the immediate future, not miracles—which, assuredly, will not be forthcoming—but a certain moderate measure of orderly progress in the direction of the fulfilment

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

of the ideals which they hold dear. The decline and fall of imperialism in the abstract will not be less gradual—and may possibly be a great deal more so—than the decline and fall of that mighty empire which affords us the finest concrete example of the principle in whose honour it was erected.

M. MACMILLAN.

---

### II.—NATIONAL ANTAGONISM.

In the winter number of *The Scottish Review* a writer remarked : "To the federal idea (or rule by, and through, the associated national group) belongs the future of Christendom." Much the same idea was recently ventilated by Professor Hobhouse in a speech delivered by him at a gathering of the National Liberal Club in London, and these views would appear to be shared by many who have considered the subject of the political future of Europe in the light afforded by a study of the past movements of history. Apparently, the "Buffer State" has, to use the language of the times, "come to stay," or if it has not yet actually "arrived," it would nevertheless appear to be the fact that the rival powers now deluging Europe with blood are one and all convinced as to the necessity of introducing the "associated national group" into the polity of the new Europe that will arise as soon as peace has been declared. Thus, in any event—no matter which way the scale of the fortunes of war may ultimately incline—the future of the "Buffer

## The Scottish Review

State" would appear to be reasonably secure. There is a general feeling abroad in its favour—the result of a wide-spread belief that the establishment of a number of moderate-sized independent or semi-independent States would do much to "steady" Europe, and to minimise the danger of the recurrence of holocausts similar to that to which Europe is now being subjected.

The purely moral aspect of the movement in favour of the establishment of these institutions need not greatly exercise our minds, or detain us very long. So far as the Great Powers are concerned, their affection for the "Buffer State" springs from purely selfish motives. Such institutions would help them to protect their own frontiers, whilst providing them at the same time with "associated national groups," more or less in dependence on themselves, and therefore liable to be exploited in the interests of the protecting Power, should "friction"—to use a current euphemism—between it and some other Great Power and its "associated national groups" unfortunately arise. In the world of politics, as in that of nature, there is little room for sentiment. It is true that to sentiment may be allotted the doubtful privilege of paying the piper; but it is "business" that calls the tune and owns the musician.

The war has had the inevitable effect of greatly increasing the output of certain forms of literature. "Histories," and accounts of States and Peoples which, before the outbreak of hostilities, were little if at all considered, even by averagely intelligent people, have recently poured forth from the press—and continue

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

to issue therefrom—in vast numbers. The geographical knowledge of the public is said to have been greatly extended by means of the war, and the literature of racialism and nationalism also shows an upward tendency, if not as regards absolute knowledge on the part of purveyors and public, at all events in respect of the number of the treatises dealing with those subjects, and the theories and speculations founded thereon. In this field, too, as in most of those others to which the literary carpet-bagger has gained access under cover of the smoke of battle, the reading-public has shown its accustomed propensity to "take sides." Many denounce nationalism, whilst thousands applaud it. Some hail racialism as the almost divinely-gifted solvent of many a seemingly well-nigh insoluble political difficulty, but to others the flaunting of this principle is as exciting and disturbing a cause as is, to a bull, the waving of a red rag in front of its eyes.

The partizans that favour the extremes of any debatable question may always be trusted to make the most of their opinions, without any undue modesty on their part, or too nice a regard to the subtleties of debate. On the other hand, those who occupy a middling position in an argument, being convinced that the rule is for the truth to lie mid-way between the two extremes, are less apt to be heard than they are prone to think that their superior moderation and sagacity entitles them to be. No doubt, it is mortifying in the extreme to be disappointed of those just rewards to which superior merit and discernment are accustomed to look, by way of recompense for the trouble

## The Scottish Review

involved in determining the exact locality in which the truth resides. But inasmuch as the tendency of many people to seek out and occupy the *via media* is due to settled habit on their part, or to the workings of a certain temper or cast of mind, rather than to any original reasoning process, it would be a mistake, as a rule, to confide in the judgments of such persons without first subjecting their arguments to the customary scrutiny. The truth is not necessarily always a colourless and a semi-moribund entity. The conduct of partizans who, from widely different motives, unite to blow up the coal of debate is no doubt too often sadly discouraging, because excessively intemperate. The zealots, by reason of their extravagances, are too apt to "put a man off," as the saying goes. We become justly offended by the manifold excesses committed by the furies that occupy the rival camps, and, plagued and harrassed beyond measure by their divers impertinences and exaggerations, too often, it is to be feared, do we, in a sort of disgusting despair, fall upon such a sort of conduct as characterised the relations between the importunate widow and the unjust judge. We are to remember, however, that there is no essential antagonism between the truth and those exaggerated forms which the argument *pro* or *con* is prone to assume under the influence of ill-regulated minds, and at the instigation of persons who are plainly biassed and prejudiced beyond all repair. The "language of moderation" is not necessarily the vernacular of the gods; and many a man has tendered what is commonly esteemed as "sensible" and "level-headed" advice

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

because he is mentally incapable of rising to any occasion on which original and vigorous thought would be required of him. Hardly one of the great figures that have trod the stage of the world had accomplished his self-imposed task had he stopped to listen either to the counsels of contemporary moderation or the whisperings of high-placed common-sense. In fine, the *via media*, always respectable though it is, and occasionally the refuge of genius though it may be, is no sacrosanct territory. A balancing and a refining mind may sometimes give good advice ; but the "language of moderation" is too often the first and last resort of hopelessly dull and commonplace intellects to allow us to regard it otherwise than as a casual means of determining the truth.

Mr. Frank Fox, in his recently published book on *The Balkan Peninsula*, speaks of that region as "a vexed area," and in another book called *The Balkans* (a compilation in which several hands have taken part), one of the authors remarks :—

"The name of Macedonia, the heart of the Balkan Peninsula, has been long used by the French gastronomers to denote a dish, the principal characteristic of which is that its component parts are mixed up into quite inextricable confusion."

In fine, everyone knows that the Balkan Peninsula is, and has been for many years past, in a state of settled unrest. It is torn by faction, and is a prey to racial hatred to an extent fully known only to those who are personally acquainted with that region, and have had practical experience of its complex and crooked politics. In that quarter of the globe national antagonism is apt

## The Scottish Review

to assume its darkest hues, and to perpetuate excesses which are the common despair of the law-giver and the humanitarian. No doubt, the difficulties to which the intensity of the racial sentiment has given rise in the Balkans are much exaggerated by religious differences and rivalries, and to these must be added, as disturbing causes, the embarrassments occasioned by the conflicting interests of the Great Powers, whose many and unwarrantable interferences in the internal affairs of these States naturally conspire further to inflame the already inflamed condition of that part of Europe. Nevertheless, it is a fact of which all careful students of the local politics cannot but be conscious that, in the Balkan Kingdoms, national antagonism is carried to highly injurious, and, in some respects, very ridiculous lengths. Indeed, so much is this the case that it may be truly said that the past and present political condition of the Balkan Kingdoms supplies us with the most striking and melancholy illustration of the abuse of the national and racial sentiments that can be. In the Balkan Peninsula, racialism runs riot, and nationalism has degenerated into an orgy of malice and all uncharitableness.

No wise man, however, will confound the use with the abuse of a principle. The political condition of the Balkan Kingdoms shows us nationalism in a febrile and a thoroughly unhealthy state ; the result, partly, of peculiar local causes, and partly of mischievous outside interference. A normal and healthy state of nationalism should reveal none of those exaggerated features that characterise this sentiment whenever, and wherever, it is indulged to excess.

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

The sense or consciousness of collective individuality which, when translated into political action, is nationalism, should always be exercised with becoming restraint —otherwise it will differ little in its genius, and perhaps nothing in its effects, from imperialism, which is its antithesis.

For my part, however, I am inclined to think that a certain amount of antagonism is necessary to the well-being of any State ; at all events I hold that there can be no doubt whatever that, in the case of inferior, that is to say subject States or Peoples, the public sense of the national or racial grievances under which they labour should be carefully encouraged until such times as independence is secured. A free and powerful State can perhaps afford to dispense with such an aid to the preservation of its liberties and independence, though I hold that a wise ruler will always be careful how he encourages Cosmopolitanism, Internationalism, and all that sort of politics which tends to make a people indifferent to the claims which race and patriotism have upon them. I say nothing against the universalism of the French Revolution, and the beautiful doctrine of the essential Brotherhood of Man ; but I respectfully submit that the stage of civilisation to which the world in general is come is not yet sufficiently far advanced to admit with safety of the adoption of those ultra humanitarian precepts to which I refer ; and, further, that until the state of society bears some sort of real correspondence to the tenets enunciated by the internationalists, cosmopolitans, *et hoc genus omne*, it would be extremely unwise to proceed as though they already enjoyed universal acceptance.

## The Scottish Review

On these grounds, I hold that the rulers of even great States would do well to place a suitable reliance on antagonism, in order the surer to safeguard the liberties of the peoples over whom they are appointed to rule. No doubt, the more the spirit of enmity is kept in disciplined subjection among a free people the more is the peace of the world likely to be promoted thereby, and the quicker shall we travel towards that desirable goal which the humanitarians and the internationalists have long ago bespoken for us. But, in the case of the great State, there is plainly a wide difference between a discreet and temperate regard to the spirit of antagonism, and the deliberate dissipation of one of the most potent of those sources from which, in critical times, the resistance of the nation to aggression is accustomed to spring.

Inferior or subject peoples, however, will not only be excused if they harbour a spirit of enmity against those that oppress them by denying them in their corporate form that which they are accustomed to allow to them in their individual capacities as citizens, namely, independence, but will be parties to the subversion of their own national interests unless they take steps to encourage a keen sense of the injustice and disabilities under which they in common labour. A subject power derives its power of resistance against oppression mainly from this source ; and so long as its liberty is denied to it, it is justified in nursing its just wrath, so as to keep it fixed at that degree of warmth which is necessary to it, if its aspirations in the direction of independence are to be realised. And as, according to Karl Marx, there is no progress without

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

struggle, so can no national movement that aims at the freeing of a subject people from the dominion of a superior, hope to succeed unless it has the assistance of that kind of friction which is glanced at above.

It is worthy of remark in this connection that the "language of moderation" which is accustomed to be held by such as are wont to cry "peace!" where, in reality, no proper grounds for concord and harmony exist, generally proceeds from those who belong to the superior or the usurping nation. Apart from such as are plainly partial, or are designing and unprincipled schemers to whom no regard should be had, those who counsel subjection, or, at all events, decry animosity, are often men of transparently good-will, and, further, are inspired by the best humanitarian precepts. Racial animosity and national hatreds are utterly repugnant to them, because these things are of the nature of evil. They are all for peace and harmony, charity, tolerance, and loving-kindness among men; and who shall blame them by reason of these, their honourable preferences? Nevertheless, those that counsel perfection to subject peoples ought to have their circumstances and the various grounds of their appeals closely examined by those to whom their exhortations are addressed. The moral face-value of their pleas on behalf of moderation may be great, but too often is it the case that these emanate from quarters which, justly or otherwise, the weak and the oppressed are accustomed to associate with the sources and the instruments of all their disabilities; and so are they suspect from the very first. Even at its best, human nature is liable, consciously or unconsciously, to be

## The Scottish Review

swayed and influenced as to its judgments and opinions by the varying nature of the circumstances in which man happens to be placed, and many a partial counsel has been tendered by one who was not only himself utterly unaware of the fact, but imagined that, by so appearing to manifest his impartiality, he was acting as the mouthpiece of essential truth. The effects of birth, breeding, education, individual and national temperament, manners and customs, position in life, profession or employment—in short of all those many things that go to comprise what is styled “environment”—are necessarily important elements in the formation of individual, as of collective, opinion; and as it is as hard for a rich man to go to Heaven as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, so it is not less difficult for even the best of us temporarily—much more enduringly—to dissociate ourselves, in the interests of abstract truth, from the circumstances in which Providence has been pleased to place us.

An inferior or subject people will, therefore, best consult their own national interests by maintaining a critical attitude as regards this “language of moderation,” no matter from what source it may hail, or however fair and plausible the arguments addressed to it may appear to be. But more particularly is it necessary that the inhabitants of oppressed countries should be always on their guard against such as belong to that ascendancy against which they are struggling, remembering that the more respectable the character, the learning, and the attainments of those who seek to blunt the edge of their resentments, and the greater

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

the seeming moderation of the language employed in order to that end, the more lively is the danger to be apprehended from those sources. Such agents of submission to usurped authority are tainted vessels, however well-meaning their efforts, or pure their intentions. They belong, consciously or unconsciously, to the party of ascendancy itself; and just as we cannot expect absolute impartiality of even the greatest historians, when they come to treat of affairs foreign to their own land, and especially of those which are open to interpretations very different from such as the majority of their own nation is accustomed to place on them, so would it be unreasonable to look for perfection in the counsels of those, no matter how eminent their parts or exalted their character, who seek to reconcile the interest of the ascendancy to which they belong with those of the subjected people or peoples whose loss of independence is the spring of all their resentments.

To oppressed nations—that is to say to all peoples that have been forcibly deprived of, or betrayed and deceived into the loss of, their birthright, which is independence—a large measure of toleration must always be indulged. If the oppressing State, or the ascendancy party, finds the dispossessed peoples uneasy under usurpation, and prone to revenge the injuries done them by resort to provocative language, or even overt acts expressive of their indignation and ill-will, the superior State must learn (without attempting to retaliate), to put up with these annoyances as best it may. It has no right further to depress and insult an already depressed and insulted people by suppressing

## The Scottish Review

its national press, by throwing the more active and able of the objectors into prison, or by otherwise adding insult to the injuries already inflicted by its own means. Plausible pretexts for the exercise of tyranny will, of course, never be wanting to the rulers of superior States; but since no State can have any right whatever in the oppression of another, it follows that, if it be guilty of usurpation, it will be but exaggerating its original offence by dealing harshly with those whose resentments it has itself called into being. The sole remedy which a superior State ought to entertain in such a case is patiently to labour to remove, by fair dealing and extraordinary benevolences, the enmity and hatred which it has itself excited in the subject people; and if these measures fail (as they are bound to do in most cases, since nothing is more precious to man than freedom) then clearly should the superior State have recourse to the one real and enduring remedy, which is to set the inferior people free. In this way, and in this way alone, may it hope to cure the mischief done, and to reconcile itself with those whom it has wronged, offended, and estranged in so cruel and unconscionable a manner.

So long as a subject State remains, against its will, in a state of dependence on a superior State, so long will it be justified in seeking every occasion of showing its hostility to the State which usurps on it in this insulting manner. Moreover, the leaders of subject States would do well to improve all possible occasions of fomenting and inflaming public opinion against the superior State, since friction of this sort is necessary to the welfare of all movements whose object is to

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

release an inferior people from their enforced dependence on a superior. The original offence against the national rights of the inferior people must be kept prominently in view, and all the lesser injuries and disabilities of which the superior State has been guilty in its efforts to hold down a protesting people must be suitably advertised, if, in order to bring the subject nation to a just sense of its grievances and disabilities, it be necessary, in order to draw the former to a head, so to stimulate them. A subject people is always exposed to this considerable danger, namely, that the influence of the superior State tends greatly to pervert them from that allegiance which they owe to their own national cause ; and it is true, as a rule, that the longer a people has been subjected to the dominion of a superior State, the more difficult it is to rouse such a people to a due sense of the grievances and disabilities under which they labour, and the more zealously and patiently must those strive who, with a view to their own and their country's release from bondage, seek to preserve the popular sense of the injuries that have been committed against the subject people.

In order to bring a subject people to a proper sense of its disabilities and the sorry position it occupies as a nation not having complete independence, it is very necessary that the appeal of the patriots should be largely concerned with the history of the dispossessed people. Nor should the resisters be in any way discouraged though there should be many among those whom they seek to benefit who show themselves to be either indifferent or hostile to the national cause. For as it is the subject nation which breeds the best

## The Scottish Review

class of patriots, so it is no less true of States that occupy that unfortunate position that they are apt to be extraordinarily fertile as regards a very different order of men—those, in a word, who hug their chains, grovel to ascendancy, make a virtue of subserviency, and supply the raw material out of which knaves and traitors are made. All States—whether free or dependent—have had experience of this sort of vermin. When Persia was plotting to overthrow Greece and the western world, there were men at Athens so unspeakably base as, for a wage, to enter into the service of her colossal enemy ; and was it not a titled Spaniard that opened the gates of his country to the Moors ? But, twixt the knaves and the incipient traitors on the one hand, and the patriots on the other, there will be found in every State that has long been subjected to the dominion of a superior a middling order of men, whose game is, under cover of a plausible carriage and fair professions, to preach up ascendancy by decrying the history of their own nation, and all its peculiar institutions, manners, and customs ; and these weeds are the more difficult to cast out inasmuch as they flourish in covert places, and draw to themselves both strength and root by reason of the sun of ascendancy in which they bask. But though, peradventure, comely enough to look on, yet in reality these growths are little better than deadly nightshades ; and the injurious influence flowing from such a source is the more to be apprehended, inasmuch as the “friends of moderation” are accustomed to use the most artful devices in order to commend themselves to their fellow-countrymen. They are always zealous to decry

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

" violence " of language or conduct on the part of the subject people and their leaders, investing their appeals with a multitude of specious pretences drawn from considerations seemingly the most fair and reasonable that can be, and denouncing " narrowness " and " bigotry " in those whom they seek to render easy under the yoke of that ascendancy of which they are themselves the secret, and frequently the paid, agents, aiders, and abettors. These are they, too, in whose mouths pleas to let " byegones be byegones " flourish abundantly, and who seek to spirit up the subject people to at all events a sort of toleration of the ascendancy under which they labour by exhorting them to suffer the " dead past to bury its past " ; to cease from vain regrets at what cannot be helped, and so had better be endured with the best possible grace ; and to direct all their energies and activities into channels to which no exception can be taken on the ground of their running counter to the " spirit of the times " in which they live, and to that " progressive instinct " which it pleases these shallow arguers and venal triflers to associate with a blind acceptance of that rule whose interests they themselves are pledged to promote.

All subject States would do well to be much on their guard against this mischievous order of men, whose honeyed words and specious arguments will, unless adequate measures be taken to expose their falsity, do much to enervate, debauch, and de-nationalise the people to whom their appeals are addressed. The best way to counter the time-servers and their machinations is, to go about to promote that very spirit which the friends of ascendancy are ever desirous

## The Scottish Review

to discourage, each and every patriot charging himself with the duty of instructing the public that they may be very sure that if the place-men and the jobbers object to it, that which they are opposed to is certain to be for the nation's good. Above all things, let each subject State pay a particular regard to its own history, and keep a firm hold of its own national institutions, manners, and customs. But besides this, it is always very necessary that the national leaders be men of good parts, having a sufficient knowledge, not only of the story of the people to which they belong, but of the history of civilised States in general, particularly of those among them that have suffered adversity at the hands of usurping neighbours, but have regained their independence through the channel of the courage and patriotism of their own peoples. Patriots that are so armed for the conflict will always be able to put the venal and the servile in their midst to the rout, by drawing just parallels between the position, circumstances, activities, claims, and ideals of the country to which they belong, and the experiences of those other States upon which misfortunes similar to those that oppress their own were at one time visited. A man, too, who has a sufficient knowledge of history, and has studied the genius of politics to good effect, will experience little difficulty in pricking the many bubbles with which superior States are accustomed to load the air, in order to deceive and perplex the peoples which they wish to keep in subjection to their rule. The want of this very necessary knowledge on the part of some that have posed as patriots in our own times has come near to causing the

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

shipwreck of more than one promising national movement.

An inferior State should never think to negotiate with a superior, with a view to the recovery of the liberties of which it has been despoiled, save on a basis of perfect equality. For instance, a country which was once independent, but is so no longer, is certain to be cheated, on one plausible ground or another, of its full national rights, should it, whilst still in a state of dependence, enter into negotiations with the superior State, in order to the recovery of its liberties, and accept the proposals of the "predominant partner." In such a case, the inferior State would do better to remain as it was, unless indeed the terms proffered are such as to hold out sufficient promise of a future recovery of complete national rights by means of the lever to be obtained by accepting what has been offered. The reason of this is, that once a formerly independent State has compromised or compounded for its national rights in the manner glanced at above, it thereby loses caste, as it were. It becomes a party to its own degradation; and by knowingly and wilfully placing itself on a level with a colony or a province, it not only sacrifices the respect in which it was formerly held as an erstwhile independent country, and as a possible re-entrant into the society of free nations, but it also seriously prejudices its right to be considered as a State which is theoretically entitled to the enjoyment of all those honours that are commonly associated with complete national freedom. *Facilis est descensus Averni*, etc. The descent of the brae is easy enough, but to retrace one's

## The Scottish Review

steps, once the plain is reached, *hic labor, hic opus est.*

Subject States, therefore, would do well to take heed how they bargain with their ravishers. Rather than consent to a bad bargain, they will agree to none at all. It is better to continue to suffer existing ills—hard though they may be to endure—than to embrace remedies that are inconsistent with principle, and that involve the surrender of the national birthright, which is very plain by what happened at the Diet of Roncaglia, when the Italian cities wisely rejected the terms offered them by the Emperor Frederick I., being not long after rewarded for their courage and fidelity to fundamentals by the “crowning mercy” of the battle of Legnano.\*

The business of all formerly independent, but now subject, States is plainly to recover their ancient liberties, and to do so they must, whenever they can, strike as hard as they are able. The dangers menacing superior States supply the grand opportunity of those that are subject to them ; and no sentimental considerations should be allowed to stand in the way of the exact observance of this maxim. When a bully is down is the seasonable time to belabour him ; for all history proves that the Pharaohs of this world are ever stout against letting the Israelites go, unless they are obliged to it.

A State that has recovered its full liberties, after having long suffered their loss, should not continue to

\* Mr. John Redmond's acceptance of the so-called “Home Rule” Bill as a “final settlement” of the sovereign claims of Ireland is a striking and melancholy illustration of indifferent statesmanship on the part of the political leaders of a subject people. Let Scotland be warned by the Irish example.

## Nationalism and National Antagonism

nourish resentment against the nation that formerly oppressed it. On the contrary, it should seek all possible means of showing goodwill towards it, by which it will prove that it is a politic State, as well as one that has a due regard to the principles of the Christian religion.

JOSÉ A. DUNCAN.



## *The Natural in Art*



OME artists are attracted more by the soul than the body. If I may confess a partiality, I should say that action for me is a matter of mental processes, and not of physical movements. Physics is worshipped by those who believe what they see and hear, by the credulous and superstitious. Such people are deceived by the obvious. They are like some demented dweller in the open, whose only knowledge of architecture is based upon the observation of outside walls and roofs ; and who is firmly convinced of the solidity of every structure in the universe. When confronted with an open door, such an one might say that progress in that direction were impossible. Life and flesh and clothes and food are but the shell of life ; and as a shell cannot satisfy hunger, so these things cannot satisfy the soul. That truth seemed to be understood by the Greeks ; for we find the Athenians sending men of thought to the wars (which they do not nowadays in England and France), and we have the spectacle of Nicias dictating triumph from his sick-bed in his camp, while we have the fate of the Athenian democracy, Agis of Lacedemonia, and Lessaphernes the Grandee of Persia, depending in turn on the council of that splendid schemer, Alcibiades. Rome was humiliated, too, by the Volscians, not so much by deeds of bravery as by the

## The Natural in Art

cunning of Curiolanus in sparing the property of the patricians while he ravaged the farms of the poor folk, thus setting class against class in Rome itself.

The wise in our day, and for the past three centuries, have been trying to avoid the fate of the schemer, which is generally defeat, by building their civilization upon the foundations of strength and stupidity. For thought means conflict ; and divided power comes from originality. A snub is more effective than subtlety. That is why physical exclusion has been practiced with such success in all ages by the party of ascendancy.

Discipline on a ship of war is maintained by separate messes ; and the ideal of uniformity in the ruling type has made the English Empire what it is.

In the *Republic*, Plato talks about "appropriate pleasures," that is those which when experienced will satisfy the best part of man. And Aristotle, who was divinely true when he talked about Art, the most exact of sciences, described it as demanding always a little departure from the commonplace.

But the belief in Nature's exterior is hard to shake. And we find even such men as Tolstoi shouting across Europe that Hamlet has no character, and is merely a bundle of irreconcilable ideas. The words of his attack, as they appeared in the *Fortnightly* of January, 1907, are worth recalling. "It is enough," he says, "that all the characters speak in a way in which no one ever did or could speak—they all suffer from a common intemperance of language." And before he uttered this he had said :—"In reading any of Shakespeare's dramas, I was, from the first, instantly convinced that he was lacking in the most important,

## The Scottish Review

if not the only, means of portraying characters—individuality of language, *i.e.*, the style of speech of each person being natural to his character. This is absent from Shakespeare."

All this seemed so odd at the time that I actually wrote an article in defence of Shakespeare, which, of course, was very foolish. And naturally I was quite well paid for my trouble.

Shakespeare lived in the world of intellect. His people never trod the earth. Even his fairies are super-supernatural. That is why Shakespeare is Shakespeare. But posterity can show few of his children.

I think the difference between the Shakesperian ideal and the modern worship of the obvious can be seen if we compare Marlowe with Goethe. How much more noble was the choice of Dr. Faustus, and how much more natural ! He delivered his soul to the Evil One so that he might purchase greatness of mind for a space. And the choice of Faust shows us what the modern desires in exchange for his soul. But the tragedy of life seems to be that he desires to force his choice upon all men.

St. Thomas of Aquin, when he looked upon a body, saw before him the soul. He was a philosopher. Moderns look upon the soul, and see before them only the body. And they are—sophists. And for them the movement of that form is more important than its motive. They condemn all who refuse to mistake the dress and habitation of a people for national life. But it is easier to copy than to create. And that is the modern world's best excuse.

Thompson picked up the physical earth, and hung

## The Natural in Art

it as a trinket on a woman's bracelet ; and that woman was the soul.

Keats was truest when he talked of what he had never seen. Instead of writing an ode about a procession of Anglican choir-boys, its rear brought up by a couple of educated clergymen with their degrees on their backs, he chose to put motion into the immovable, and to mirror a dead age by that through which it revealed its soul.

Cuchulain and the Irish heroes approach and sometimes transcend the Greek, and are real to us because they were always doing the impossible. And, as the world understands it, impossible things are the only things which can be done. In fact, when Cuchulain dies, we are burdened with sorrow because his death, like his life, had no counterpart in the commonplace ; and our hearts are broken, just as the very stone to which he strapped himself broke its granite heart in twain.

Children realise life's mystery, and for them the only real people in the world are fairies. So the artist should strive for that beauty which is not of this world, just as the saint who searches for the source of all perfection, has for his own that " peace which passeth all *understanding*."

Shakespeare, who was really a century too late, and St. Francis of Assisi, are the exponents of a religion and art that have been forgotten, while General Booth and Mrs. Hemans are the very archetypes of what is desired by the religious and artistic multitude to-day. If Zola hid the spirit of man in rags, Henry James merely hides the soul in the finest lace.

## The Scottish Review

In thinking about these matters, we may commit many a grievous blunder. And it should be plain enough that this is no defence of unnatural work. Actors of the finer type condemn the production of Shakespeare by actor-managers who intoxicate the public intellect at a feast of the senses. They wisely object when their fellows declaim in the grand style. And there is a sane school which would teach the public to love Shakespeare as he is spoken naturally, and unspoiled by stage "effects." And this teaching comes near to the truth.

But if Shakespeare's characters speak as no human could speak, how can it be art to utter such language naturally? Because, of course, such phrases are natural! They were natural because they were the supreme expression of the writer's soul, and they become part of the nature of each man who absorbs them. Jewels are natural to aristocracy; and there are jewels which are appropriate to the aristocracy of intellect.

What deserves condemnation is that colourless and unnatural work which has no counterpart in the world except vacuity, and which cannot become natural because it is incapable of producing an honest response in the mind of anyone, least of all in that of its producer.

But it is an easy, and perhaps a "paying," effort to condemn that which is the unspoiled expression of an artist—a self-revelation which may be original. And if it is original it is priceless. For there is only one thing more valuable than antiquity, and that is novelty. And "novelty" is a martyr-word which should be canonised by the Society of Authors, after

## The Natural in Art

which, devotion to it should be encouraged by means of the sale of figureless pedestals.

It is hard to set limits to the scope and quality of work which may be said, in the more delicate sense, to be natural. Almost do artists complain that the thing which they are creating deliberately creates itself. Brilliant and exquisite ideas, clearly the outcome of no conscious process, are presented to the mind with a suddenness which seems to call for their instant seizure, if they are to be utilised. This apparent bounty that springs from intuition, or, as some think, from a detached consciousness, may be more easily observed in operation when a novelist finds that a character, which he has very perfectly drawn, steps clear of the limits within which it was to have been confined, and destroys the plan of the novel. The actions of such a character are often quite incomprehensible. But afterwards, when the artist in his final mood of analysis regards the work as a whole, he sees how these apparently wayward performances make possible a conclusion which without them would have been chaotic, but which with them is a summing up of intelligent acts, clearly performed because the actor had a motive which he seemingly chose should remain unrevealed until the end.

The sudden presentation to the mind of some brilliant thought might be aptly compared to the bursting of a bud into flower which, because of its rapid coming to full bloom, must of necessity perish quickly. But in the deliberate wilfulness of a character there is, in each act of this artistically created thing, a quality to which the planting and growth of a seed

## The Scottish Review

has some relation. We can, at least, suppose the seed to remain in darkness under the soil ; and after it has thus been hidden for a while there may come a sudden uprising of some strange flower.

The apprehension in the final stage of an artist's work, of certain ideas which could have had no existence without a conscious effort of will upon the part of a character, bears a strong resemblance to the presentation to an artist's mind of sudden, bright ideas. So we have at least this addition to our data, upon which speculation is reasonably possible. The act of will which produced the idea resembles the planting of a seed.

Because an artist receives ideas which are presented to his mind, instead of being deliberately constructed by him, is no reason for his claiming to receive inspiration of any sort. His hair grows, and that phenomenon presents itself to his mind as the product of certain physical activities of which he is quite unconscious. So, in the spirit of man, there are activities not open to observation. They are hidden from sight as effectively as the fears of Rabelais are in his prologue to *Gargantua*, and are as superior, regarding their products, as the soul is superior to the flesh.

It should be enough for an artist if he recalls that self distrust which is apt to obtrude itself when he contemplates some task. He may wax confident because he can realise what powers may manifest themselves when he begins to conceive a work of art ; but the true artist is never habitually self-confident. His moods may fail him. But always he will be apt to hesitate on the threshold of that enchanted world

## The Natural in Art

in which he truly lives, and apart from which his life is mechanical and commonplace. The greatest General, if dressed as a common soldier and placed in the ranks, would probably be somewhat of a failure as a common soldier ; and life has a way of detaining big souls in a crowd, which, considering how small the greatest man is, may be rather a good thing after all. It is so, very frequently, with the artist. And for him escape is sometimes passing hard. As Pater says, when he discovers to us the object of philosophy, as it presented itself to the mind of Plato, "It is an escape from the evils of the world." And "the evils of the world" are, for the artist, those things which the world calls on him to admire. He must either worship the golden image, or chance torture and possible destruction.

In early, and even late, Victorian days, before Whistler had told the truth about that high-priest of platitude, Ruskin, by saying that political economists claimed Mr. Ruskin as an artist, while artists claimed Mr. Ruskin as a political economist, it was the fashion to publish stumbling-blocks to learning—such as Lucian's "True History," its "calf" (Gulliver), The Decameron, Lysistrata, The Ecclesiazusae, and literature of that kind, in a form suitable for "young people." But now we are improving. And yet that sort of world-interference with classics may well account for the conduct of a certain professor of my acquaintance, who was accustomed to choose, with amazing regularity, the most "impossible" passages for translation by the women who attended his lectures. In a certain curious sense he was right. The world's is a language

## The Scottish Review

of lies ; and when the artist speaks truth he is misunderstood. The world demands to be photographed or phonographed. But the artist should speak the language of the gods, and must interpret, if he choose, the things of the earth into the language of beauty. There are artists, however, who devote themselves so much to interpretation that they grow impatient of speech, which is spontaneous. And it is for them, if they desire to be styled artists, to be more intellectually polite, and to condemn nothing which they cannot understand. A man must have made a name before he can afford to make mistakes. But there are some mistakes which can destroy famous and infamous alike. To those artists who are intemperate in language, it might be made plain, with the aid of many "shocking examples," that a glass of sherry is the thin end of the pledge !

A. NEWMAN.



## *The New Nomenclature*



OR long ago a London daily journal remarked that the English are not an imaginative people ; and though the assurance, in view of the notoriety of the facts, was hardly necessary, yet its appearance in such a quarter lends additional support to the common belief that exists in regard to this subject. Doubtless, the English have produced many men endowed with remarkable gifts of imagination. The splendour of the English contribution to poetry is a case in point, though it is to be remarked, in this connexion, that another is, to what extent is the existence of that fine body of literature due to the workings of purely native minds ?

But though it would be foolish to deny the gift of imagination to numbers of eminent Englishmen, yet the paradox surely holds good that the English people, as a whole, are not (nor have they ever been) a people remarkable on account of their imaginative powers. Indeed, the truth would rather seem to be that, as a people, they are singularly wanting in the quality to which I refer. Their personal and their place-names are, for the most part, matter of fact and commonplace to a remarkable degree. They possess not much national music, and what they have of it, is little characteristic, and of a low and undistinguished

## The Scottish Review

genius. The national language has been kicked and cuffed into a certain measure of refinement and flexibility, but originally it was a most barbarous form of speech, and was the latest of all the considerable tongues of Europe to be accounted polite. The national cooking is atrocious—a seemingly trifling, though really, a highly significant fact. Their State religion and their Constitution are the obvious consequences of an infinity of successive "compromises"; and as compromise and accommodation are nearly always the unmistakable signs of a mediocre and an unimaginative mind, we shall not be far wrong if we set down the English as a nation of mediocrities.

It is notorious that when our neighbours across the Border go about to erect a statue to any person, alive or dead, they blunder most egregiously. *Imprimis*, as the lawyers say, the English cannot make a decent statue for the life of them; but when they have perpetrated that which they should never think to undertake, the resulting misfit is invariably set up in the wrong place. The same national inability successfully to grapple with the possibilities of what are termed—to use the cant language of the studios—"artistic situations" is observable in respect of nearly every endeavour made by the English with a view to showing themselves to be both civilised and polite. Their exhibitions, shows, national feasts, festivities, and so forth, testify, indeed, to that power of the purse which is—or rather used to be—theirs; but it is to be observed that taste and refinement and imagination are rarely to be associated with such public displays. And,

## The New Nomenclature

after all, is it not by these, and similar, fruits that the national genius of a people may best be known ? It has been observed before now that the English people take their pleasures sadly ; but whether this arises from the national propensity to gloom, or from the depressing character of those diversions in which the average Englishmen indulges, I cannot find that any one has yet satisfactorily determined. Probably, " both parties are in fault," as a lawyer might say. A dull and unimaginative people can scarcely be expected to take their pleasures otherwise than sadly ; whilst if those pleasures and diversions themselves tend to exaggerate the prevailing national tendency to mental dyspepsia, is it not plain that, by so casting the horoscope, as it were, we have completed the circle which the science of psychology has hitherto failed to describe ?

Of a lively and imaginative people some considerable measure of tact may always be confidently expected, whilst, on the other hand, those nations whose minds experience a certain difficulty in rising above the level of the ground will always be apt to be somewhat rude and boorish in their conduct and carriage. Glanville, one of the greatest diplomatists that have ever lived, held the Teutonic diplomatic talent in supreme contempt. He described the Germans of his day as tactless and blundering beyond measure ; and similar unkind things are wont to be charged upon their near kinsmen the Anglo-Saxons. What the Spanish style *falta intelaegencia* has probably more to do with English tactlessness and boorishness than downright malevolence and corruptness of heart. The English

## The Scottish Review

people have, doubtless, many fine qualities ; but among them there are not to be found, tact (which is of the head), or thoughtfulness and consideration for others (which is of the heart). In both these respects, they are sad bunglers and blunderers—as odd and ungainly as their national pet, the bull-dog, though, as a people, they are not, be it observed, half as civil to men as the brute is to his own species, if those that speak fair of the ways of the canine Caliban are to be believed.

The art of Agag would not appear ever to have been held in much esteem by the English nation. English mobs of the Eighteenth Century were proverbially rude, brutish, and ferocious. The red-coated vermin that spread itself over the Highlands of Scotland after the collapse of the '45 committed villainies which would have sent that respectable pillar of Allied humanity, Lord Bryce, to his grave long before he could have drawn up any "Report," supposing that he had lived in those times, instead of being vouchsafed to our own. I have heard it said that Smithfield Market in London was a place in which Englishmen were accustomed to expose their wives, either for sale, or for some other purpose more in consonance with the object of a meat centre ; but as this latter is merely a contemporary French belief, I prefer to dismiss it from these present considerations, contenting myself, by way of conclusion to this head, by remarking, that the English people have never been celebrated for tact.

The English people do not much use proverbs in their conversation or their literature, but they have

## The New Nomenclature

one to the effect that, "What's bred in the bone will come out in the flesh." That is a true saying. It is as hard for a nation as it is for an individual to belie, by its conduct, the call of the blood. The generality of the English nation is born tactless ; and, though it is the bounden duty of their civil and religious pastors and masters to purge the people committed to their care of that unsightly blemish, yet is the Old Adam always mighty difficult to root up. Considering the past history of what is styled the "British" Empire, and the way in which it was got together, it was hardly tactful on Mr. Asquith's part to thrust his country forward, as the "Champion of Small Nations." It seems to me that that action on his part was neither tactful nor circumspect. It was calculated to raise, in profane circles, what newspaper men given to reporting political speeches are apt to describe (within brackets) as "a laugh." Besides that sort of blessing has an inconvenient habit of returning to roost when and where its presence (on the loftiest moral grounds, of course) is least to be desired ; but let us now quit this branch of our topic, and return to our muttons.

The English Government has recently been making desperate efforts to pull itself "up-to-date." Already, apparently, has it entirely reorganised the public postal service, the depth and usefulness of which reform may be measured by the fact that a letter from the north of Scotland to the south of England now takes about a week *en voyage*, assuming that it be so lucky as ever to reach its destination. It has also—a further signal mark of the times—introduced into these Kingdoms a measure of Compulsory Military

## The Scottish Review

Service, by which whimsical method it has sought to emphasise as well its ever-growing detestation of Germanic Militarism as its absorbing affection for the spirit and letter of the English Constitution. But, in its consuming zeal for Reform and Efficiency, our honest innovators have not hesitated to do more than this. They have lately coined and uttered a wonderful new word, and "Recruitment" is its blessed name.

I submit that "Recruitment" is one of the multitude of straws that show the direction of the prevailing wind. It is a very ugly word, and bears as little evidence of taste as do the coins and the postage-stamps that circulate in these Kingdoms, by which it is plain that the English mint for words is as bankrupt in art as is the official mint for coins. So far as this enquiry is concerned, "Recruitment" makes a very poor beginning; but let us now proceed a step or two further, and overhaul certain of recent English efforts in the province of what is styled "Official Nomenclature." These may well be considered from the point of view, firstly, of taste, and, secondly, of general suitability; and it will be surprising indeed if our brief investigations in regard to this matter do not result in the conviction that the good old English propensity to "muddle," blunder, and bad taste has by no means deserted that nation, even under the pressure applied by Armageddon.

In the first place, the friends of our old friend "Britain" are once again full of querulous complaints. "England" has been substituted for "Britain" in many an official document and public pronouncement. A

## The New Nomenclature

placard inviting the inhabitants of "North Britain" to do their "duty" to "England," in accordance with the wording of the famous Nelsonian exhortation, was at one time displayed on the public hoardings in Scotland, and was not withdrawn until fiery protest had been made. It is asserted, too, that many English newspapers and politicians continue to use the offensive word "England," etc., where, it is affirmed, "Britain," etc., should be employed, and in divers other ways too numerous to mention, have the withers of the supporters of what is called the "National Nomenclature" been wrung in a manner both poignant and unkind.

For my part, I am free to confess that the "British" agitation leaves me as cold as a stone, or an *Official Communiqué*. I recognise the dangers to genuine Scottish Nationalism that would arise, in the event of the expressions for which the North Britons contend obtaining that generous measure of vogue which it is their desire to secure for them. I do not regard the word "Britain" as in any way, or on any grounds, a suitable appellation for this congeries of Kingdoms. Ethnologically, it is quite indefensible. Conventionally, there is little, if anything to be said for it, and besides these serious objections there is a further one which must necessarily weigh enormously with every thinking Nationalist (whether he be English, Scots, Irish, or Welsh), namely, that the "National" Nomenclature in question tends to the destruction of the ancient national land-marks of these Kingdoms.

The other day I picked up from a bookstall an illustrated publication which bore the title of *A Short*

## The Scottish Review

*History of the British Army.* It was with some curiosity that I turned over its leaves. The book professed to be a succinct account of the more notable of the exploits of the "British" Army, from the earliest times to the present day. It taught me a good deal about "British" history in general, and the "British" Army in particular, that I was not previously acquainted with. For instance, it showed me what the average "British" soldier who fought at the battle of Hastings looked like in his war paint. And I was surprised to see how becomingly and picturesquely my "ancestors" were clothed, who fought at Agincourt, under the presumably "British" King Henry V.\* Of course, the perfervid North Britain of to-day will retort on these manifest solecisms that they are merely so many signs of ignorance, or historical "slackness," on the part of those who are responsible for them. But who, pray, I ask, is prepared to stop, when writing a popular book or making a public speech, in order so to unravel his historical periods as to observe those nice chronological exactitudes on which the professional North Briton so vehemently insists? If the Army, Navy, Constitution, etc., are to-day "British," which, formerly, were most certainly Eng-

\* In his speech on the second reading of the Compulsion Bill, Mr. Asquith actually made this mistake, i.e., that of styling Henry V. a "British" King, and being promptly corrected by Mr. J. M. Hogge "withdrew the aspersion," as the newspaper reporter is apt to say. Mr. Asquith laughingly apologised for the blunder by observing that he was unconsciously led into it by his general preference for the term "British," a sly thrust, doubtless, at the North British fanatics.

## The New Nomenclature

lish, who is going to take the trouble to stop and point out the exact period or date at which one or other of those institutions ceased to be English and became, by a stroke or two of the pen, "British"? And what about our own little lot—to say nothing here of Irish and Welsh contributions to the composition of the fat-headed calf which the North Britons desire to set up? Are our Army, Navy, Constitution, etc., to be censored out of the pages of history, just to ease the strain of that noose into which the modern North Briton has chosen to thrust his foolish head? If the Army and Navy, which to-day are, and to-morrow may be "somewhere" else, are "British," how is it that their originals are to be traced, not by any means to a British source, but to *exclusively English* institutions? Surely, this procedure has not the approval of the North Britons? But if it does command their assent, then all I can say is that, while (thanks to them) the camels lead a charmed existence, they are unconscionably rough on the gnats. If, however, they object to seeing Scotland and her former national institutions, manners, and customs ignored in the cool and impudent manner indicated by these remarks, why on earth do they not get a move on themselves and say so? The other day, in the House of Commons, a North British M.P. rose up in his place, and uttered some painful platitudes about "our" *Magna Charta*. This took place in what our friends are fond to describe as the "British" Parliament, which, from first to last, is as English as English can be. What have I, a Scotsman, to do with John and his rascally Barons? I may take a

## The Scottish Review

mild and detached interest in the circumstances attending the death of that disreputable prince, for dying seems to be the only creditable thing with which we may properly honour his memory ; but when I have been told that he expired of a surfeit of lampreys—or was it hot lobsters ?—I see no reason why I should trouble myself any further about him, save perhaps to think that he had shown himself to be less of a barbarous glutton had he committed his most happy despatch by partaking too largely of melons, which, if my memory be right, proved picturesquely fatal to more than one illustrious member of the Imperial house of Hapsburg.

But the long and the short of the whole matter is, that our North Britons are got tied up in a knot. The toils, as it were, which they spread for others have recoiled on themselves. The fowler, for want of skill and address in his trade, has fallen a victim to his own snare. The boomerang has prostrated the thrower, instead of slaying the game. The "British" Cult has proved itself to be so clumsy and unmanageable in the actual working thereof that its effect is to confound and stultify the very parties it was designed to benefit. Scotland and Scotsmen are under no obligations to it. It obfuscates its friends, and plagues equally the hostile and the indifferent. Away with it, for a confusing, blundering, and utterly bewildering system of Nomenclature ! The edge and temper of the spade are not to be improved by my going a kind of new Grand Tour in order to style it an "agricultural implement." Our ancestors were Scots, and Scots

## The New Nomenclature

let us remain.\* Down with the new-fangled verbiage ! Just to please the whims of a "parcel of rogues in a nation," I, personally, strongly object to having my proper national designation usurped on by a trumpery theatrical-looking appellation, cribbed from a tavern sign-board, or the pages of historical fable in which the woad-wearers roam in all the naked simplicity of primitive manners and customs. This Scotland of ours is (or recently was) a comparatively free country. Let those, therefore, who delight to style themselves "Britons"—with or without a geographical prefix—continue in that harmless form of lunacy, if they and Morningside find themselves mutually attractive ; but, as regards the sane and the sensible in the land, let the maniacs adjourn to that place where the wicked never cease from troubling, and the weary get no rest.

The sort of vexatious confusion to which the North British Nomenclature gives rise may be gauged by the following. In 1603, by the accession of James VI. to the English throne, the united crown became "British," though the English Parliament remained English, and that of Scotland continued to be Scottish. This alone tends to confusion, but what designation should we apply to the armed forces of the Crown under the new political arrangement brought about by the royal union ? The Scottish forces raised to help England in her Seventeenth Century wars were raised by the Scots Parliament, which had also to

\* "In a frenzy the people began to cry out that they were Scotsmen, and would be Scotsmen still ; that their commissioners and ministers were traitors, and that there should be 'no Union.' "  
—*History of England*, by Craik.

## The Scottish Review

provide the money for their upkeep, but, nevertheless, they were employed in the service of "British" Kings. Were these forces "British" or Scottish, or what? An even greater ambiguity would appear to attach to the Constitutional position of the Scotsman during, at all events, a portion of the period we are here considering. On the accession of James to the English throne, the Scots were declared "naturalized" in England, or should we say (in spite of the continued existence of the two independent Parliaments of Scotland and England) "Great Britain," James having styled himself King of "Great Britain," etc.? But after the Restoration this arrangement, owing to the jealousy of the English, was revoked, and thus being deprived of his Constitutional *locus standi* in England, or "Great Britain," it would appear that, though a "British Subject" under the Crown, yet the Scot of those days was neither strictly "Scot" nor strictly "British"! No doubt the blame of all this confusion and uncertainty is to be laid at the door of James himself, who should not have taken the title of King of "Great Britain," unless, at the same time, the incorporating Union indicated by the appellation assumed by the Crown were simultaneously extended to the civil and political institutions that obtained under it. Every schoolboy knows that it was James's desire to complete the work to which he had set his hand, by incorporating the two Parliaments of Scotland and England. That intention, however, which lay very near to his heart, he was not permitted to fulfil. The title of any monarch under a federative system, which was what James was appointed to reign over,

## The New Nomenclature

requires that his official designation should correspond with the political facts characterising that arrangement. For instance, the Emperor Francis Joseph, who is at the head of a federative system, is ruler of *Austria-Hungary*, not of Austria alone. But James, with his usual egregious vanity and impetuosity (where no physical danger to himself was involved) insisted on proudly seating himself in the coach, regardless of the fact that the horses that he designed to draw it obstinately refused to leave their stables. The folly and immoderate vanity of James are perhaps to be excused, since nothing better were to be expected of so bombastic, and, in spite of his great learning and experience, politically "feckless" a prince; but I apprehend that our North Britons of to-day, who manifestly design to commit us to the perplexities and absurdities perpetrated by James VI., would be foolish to rely on receiving a like measure of toleration for their pains. They may be adepts at the art of staring a difficulty in the face, and nonchalantly pursuing their way; but I beg leave to remark that there are thousands of Scotsmen whose minds are not so erratically constituted, and who look for order, method, and strict regard to ethnological and historical fact in any system of public Nomenclature which it may be proposed to set up.

But though I am persuaded that the "British" Cult is a thing to avoid, as tending to obfuscation on the one side and the suppression of national individuality on the other, yet I cheerfully admit that here again John Bull has blundered most bullishly. That unruly member of the animal "awkward squad"

## The Scottish Review

is always treading on some one's toes, or committing irreparable havoc in some inoffensive person's pet china-shop. If there are numbers of neo-Scotsmen who object to the epithet "England" as it is commonly applied in the newspapers, and by the public men of that country, surely at a time like the present, tact and policy equally require that the "offensive" expressions should be as far as possible discarded? It is true that the Roman army was continued to be styled Roman—and properly so, looking to its origin and genius—in spite of the fact that for very many years before the Empire fell it was almost exclusively composed of foreign mercenaries. Still, if there is, as I believe is the case, a wide-spread feeling in Scotland in favour of the use of the word "Britain" and its cognates for official purposes, it seems to me, who, as a Scot, am completely indifferent whether the institutions in question be styled "English," "British," or "Double-Dutch," that the English people and government would be but consulting their own interests by bowing, as gracefully as they know how, to the pro-"British" clamour. After all, it is but a trifling concession that they are asked to make; and if they possessed but a single ounce of brains in common among them, it would not be running but leaping with that dull-witted people, in order to placate the neo-Scots; for nothing is more plain than this, that nothing is more calculated to bring about that political unity which so many leading English statesmen ardently desire than a general use of the new-fangled nomenclature to which I refer.

So much for the North Britons, and their grievances

## The New Nomenclature

and complaints, which I have done my best to set forth in as plain and candid a fashion as possible. It is now time that I left that singular people to adjust their various differences with their bed-fellows, the South Britons, and proceeded to the consideration of certain particulars that affect *Scotsmen*, and *Scotsmen* alone.

Ever since the present war was brought on the carpet, there has been a notable tendency on the part of the English press, Government, and leading men to refer to these realms as though they had but a single monarchy to deal with. First of all, there is "The Defence of the Realm Act," which may St. George and his dragon, the Censor, long preserve! Since the war began we have been introduced to many a "thin-end-of-the-wedge," and this particular Act seems to me to be one of the stoutest specimens of the kind to which we have been introduced. But let that pass. What I am concerned to enquire is, why "Defence of *the* Realm"? Is our separate nationality so utterly undone that the ancient Kingdom of Scotland no longer exists, in spite of the fact that it is the custom to apply certain Acts of Parliament to Scotland that are not rendered obligatory in England, and *vice versa*; in spite of the fact that the Lyon office—the Scottish royal fount and seat of honour—still exists; in spite of the fact that King George is accustomed to refer to "my Kingdom of Scotland" on the occasions of the official visits which, from time to time, he pays to our country; in spite of the fact that there is in existence a royal Establishment for Scotland, together with hereditary household officers, and a

## The Scottish Review

separate Body-guard for the King, whenever he sets foot on Scottish soil ? But lest I should be charged by some with refining about trifles, I now crave the reader's permission to withdraw myself from these courtly precincts into which, all unworthy by reason of blood and condition, I have ventured to trespass, and to busy myself, as becomes a son of the people, with affairs that are more in consonance with my humble position in life, and with those democratic opinions that I hold.

"The people of this country," "the nation," "the race"—these, and many other expressions of similar import are daily gramaphoned forth from the English press, like brays from an ass on a rainy day, or bellowings from Bottomley, what time that amazing specimen of the Cockney breed is causing the walls of the bottomless pit of his pitiful vanity and egotism to reverberate with the barbarous screechings and rancorous clamours of his debased and muddle-headed "politics." I am quite aware that, as regards this particular, a numerous and influential section of our Scottish press is equally blameworthy ; and far be it from me to seek to excuse their example or to extenuate their ignorance. These North British sheets are led by the nose by their *confrères* of England, and, like slaves that have long been used to servitude, and make a virtue of apathy, rather glory in their fetters and chains than resent and take shame from them. This section of our press always reminds me of a story I once read in the English comic journal, *Punch*. It appears that it is the custom in London that when one Club is "up" for repairs, its members are tem-

## The New Nomenclature

porarily entertained by some other Club which is not in the hands of the builders or decorators. A temporarily dispossessed clubman once strolled (so the story goes), into another of these institutions, whose freedom, for the time being, had been conferred on him ; and, being minded to eat, demanded of the head-waiter the price that was charged for a portion of cold grouse. The man replied that it would be so and so. "Oh," says the stranger, "that seems a very high charge. Why, at the *Junior* I could get it for half." "I dessay," says the flunkey, with lofty scorn, "The *Junior* would *heat hanythink!*" Well, it appears to me that the North British press possesses an equally accommodating appetite. It will swallow anything—even dirt—provided it hails from across the Border.

My objection to the Nomenclature referred to above can be briefly stated, and almost as quickly exhausted. In the first place, I object to the expression "the race," and its cognates, on the ground of ethnological fact. These kingdoms are not inhabited by one race, viewing that matter purely from a conventional point of view, and having no regard whatever to what science has to say on that head. Conventionally speaking, the English are Teutons ; whilst the Scots, Irish, and Welsh belong to the Celtic branch of the great European family. Why, then, refer to "the race" or "the nation," as though there were but one in the first case, where there certainly are two ; or as if there were but one in the second case, where there are assuredly four ? I beg leave to remind the press and the people of England that we Irish, Welsh, and Scots are every bit as tenacious of, and as much

## The Scottish Review

attached to, our own separate race and national individuality as ever they can be to theirs ; and that vast numbers among us have a very lively objection to being "absorbed" in that wholesale fashion to which the war has afforded so decided and menacing a spurt. To recommend tact and consideration for the feelings and susceptibilities of others would, unfortunately, appear to be a sad waste of breath, where the average Englishman is concerned ; but as it sometimes happens that persons ordinarily deaf to appeals of that sort can be got at through some other channel, I beg leave to remind the great English public that, as regards the war now carrying on in Europe, they are posing as the Lord-high-champion of Small Nations ; and that, consequently, conduct of the character glanced at above is not easily to be reconciled with their public professions. It is true that that noble and altruistic resolve on the part of England has not so far produced much fruit. Alas ! how ubiquitous is ingratitude ; and how often are the best of us apt to have our purest motives and our kindest intentions barbarously crossed and misunderstood by those very ones that we yearn to clasp to our bosoms, and who should be the first to recognise our uprightness and the benevolence of our designs with respect to themselves ! Alas ! that human nature—at all events as she is found outside England—should be so plagiarily cast ! But, fortunately, the English are in many respects a long-suffering as well as a great people. They are used to such little rubs. They have already according to their histories and newspapers, "saved Europe" dozens of times, and, on some occasions, quite

## The New Nomenclature

in spite of her perverse and ungrateful self, apparently. So let us sing "long live the King"; and the other "great George," who is now graciously condescending to rule over us, long may he also flourish! Depend on it, John Bull will yet "muddle through," and so save that ungrateful and cantankerous entity, Europe, from her own evil genius, which is plainly herself; and though John himself should perish in the process, depend on it that contingency signifies little or nothing to a person of so self-sacrificing and altruistic a disposition. Still, as unfortunately there are spots to be found in the sun, and as the noblest metal known to us is rarely dug up from the bowels of the earth free of all admixture of grosser and baser substances, so are there to be discovered certain minor blemishes even in the guileless and lovable character of John Bull. A certain want of liveliness in responding to the suggestions of tact is, I regret to say, one of them. He should take heed of this trifling fault, lest, magnifying itself with the passing of the years, it grow upon, and spoil, him, as indeed settled habits of an injurious nature have always a tendency to do.

There is one other matter that is germane to the issue I have raised, and to which I would like very briefly to refer before I bring these remarks to a close. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and his friends are, at present, much exercised in mind touching the sins of diplomacy, to the machinations of which they trace the origin of the present war. But it seems to me that, so far as the Entente Powers are concerned, the agitation which the Union of Democratic Control has set on foot is a superfluous disturbance of the soul. The Allies have

## The Scottish Review

no diplomacy to speak of ; and, judging by the " Balkan muddle," never had, nor do they seem capable of constructing, any. The Society to which I refer would, therefore, it appears to me, do more useful work by addressing themselves to the restraining of some of the more exuberant exuberances of English tactlessness. The " war " on German trade is a case in point. This may, or may not, have been carried to that pitch of perfection and success which has been publicly claimed for it in English circles ; but, in any event, the spectacle of responsible ministers of the Crown rising in their places in the Westminster Parliament and gloating over the " entire destruction of German trade " is at present neither politic nor edifying. No doubt, England entered the present war from the purest motives. She always does. That is her glorious fate. Her histories prove that all her wars have been waged to benefit mankind. That is the real reason why she tolerates an empire—just to show the Almighty and His Angels how organised philanthropy should be run. But at the same time (strong in the consciousness of the righteousness of her own cause and intentions), it behoves her to pay some little regard to the opinions and prejudices of the weaker vessels that surround her—those countries in fine, which, from crass credulity or seasoned malevolence, are not disposed to accept the high moral estimate which England invariably places on her own actions. The gloatings and jubilations of which I have spoken are not, in these circumstances, to be regarded otherwise than as tactless in the extreme. They supply a ready text, and afford a convenient handle, to the aspersions of the many who pretend to

## The New Nomenclature

discern nothing in England's participation in the European conflict but an endeavour on her part to crush and humiliate a powerful commercial rival, by means of a ring or combination of powers hostile to an enemy she could not otherwise hope to subdue. "The English," said the Emperor to Napoleon after Austerlitz, "are traders who set fire to the Continent to secure the commerce of the world." The charge is, of course, as are all reflections on the conduct and character of the English, a horrid libel; but he that is the constant butt of the same kind of aspersion should be more than commonly careful to avoid all appearance of affording grounds to the same.

A SCOTTISH ARTISAN.



## *The Spell of the Sea*

(The author of the following beautiful essay is Coinneach MacLeod, who is justly esteemed as one of the best Gaelic writers of to-day. Mr. MacLeod is a native of the Island of Eigg, and is learned in all that relates to the sea-lore, as well ancient as modern, of the Scottish Gael. This accomplished young author has written a number of essays on themes similar to *Dutharachd na Mara* (which I have roughly translated "The Spell of the Sea"); and it were hard to say, where excellence abounds, which one of his efforts is entitled to be regarded as his best work, though "The Spell of the Sea" should serve as well as any to shew forth Mr. MacLeod's peculiar gifts as a writer, and the complexion of the genius by which his pen is moved.

I have thought it preferable, not to give rhymed, but literal, translations of the verses wherewith Mr. MacLeod's essay is richly gemmed; and I have added a few explanatory notes where, it appears to me, the text, in their absence, might read somewhat obscure. Moreover, I must again bespeak the reader's kind indulgence as regards the translation I have made, which is, as to the original, as a piece of paste to a diamond of the finest water, or a drop from Clyde compared with the sparkling dew of the morn.—Ed. *The Scottish Review.*)

## The Spell of the Sea



is said that "it is an hereditary instinct that takes the chick of the Seal to the sea"; and it is just as natural that the Islesman should turn his eye, his heart, and his hand to the Western Ocean. And, without enlarging on that subject, methinks that there is something in the literature of the sea—its depth, its restlessness, and its silent strength—which is not so often to be found in the literature of the hills. Perhaps there are two things which are responsible for this. If we separate oral from written tradition—if we distinguish between poets that are to-day without a baptismal name, and such as, in their own times and under their own appellations, secured the transcription and publication of their poems—we shall see that it is oral, and not by any means written, tradition that composes the bulk of that literature. And the effect of this on oral tradition is very manifest. If there is one thing that distinguishes the poets who have made merchandise, as it were, of their poetry, it is the wealth of their diction. The words are poured out—often without the least heed to their proper order and arrangement—as the waterfall gushes from the rock; and though this is plain enough proof of the virtues of the Gaelic language, proving how torrential, copious, it can be—yet it cannot be denied that the work of these poets suffers greatly by reason of the excessive abundance of the diction employed. Now, the literature of the sea is free from that blemish, because the great poets have refrained from making the ocean a subject of their poetry. As for Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair\*, the ocean never caused him to

\* Commonly esteemed the greatest of the Gaelic Bards.

## The Scottish Review

sing, as did Allt an t-Siuair ;\* and neither did the State-ship† of Clan Donald ever put him in love with salt water ; for, in his estimation, there was nothing in the sea save an enemy-between-ports, that was of no sort of use except to test the sea-going qualities of the clan barge, and the seamanship of the Mac Donalds.

There is another thing, too, which distinguishes the literature of the sea from the literature of the hills. According to the belief of the people, the Western Ocean is a living thing, possessing human feelings, and having power—a power both good and evil—over the forces of nature. But no one has ever been of that opinion with regard to the hills. Whatever may be the height or the beauty of the mountain, it is still but a hill ; and though men may meet, the mountains will remain immovable. It is not the same with regard to the sea, which is ever on the move. It would describe the entire circumference of the hemispheres to come at the grave of its own folk ; and there was never a spell, nor an art known to the Black Art, that was not (two-thirds out of the three of them) the gift of the sea ; and the third that was not the sea's, that part was contained in the right hand of the King of the Elements.

It was not possible, therefore, that these opinions should be without their due effect on the literature of the sea ; and to prove that this is the case, though

\* "The Sugar Burn," one of his most admired poems.

† The same poet's poem on the subject of the State barge of Clan Donald is held to be his *magnum opus*. Of its kind, it is probably the finest poem ever composed.

## The Spell of the Sea

the people are accustomed to praise Mount Dòrain in very outspoken language, yet they *croon* the sea-ditties, like children whispering in the dark, and the grave-yard near to them. But without here entering into any greater detail, it is sufficient to observe that love and fear, life and death, joy and sorrow, are, with us, mutually inspiring topics, and that these shew forth a literature whose depth and whose might are as the depth and the might of the sea itself. Or, if I may express myself in another way, in comparison with the literature of the sea, the greatest part of that of the hills is as a burning stretch of heather to the live coal of the smithy furnace.

Now, the old people are accustomed to speak about "The Spell of the Sea"; and by that they mean that there is that connected with it which is not to be associated with other natural objects, such as earth and rocks; and that it possesses qualities which are not commonly possessed by the seed of Adam. We have already seen that, in the opinion of the people, it is a living thing; and we have many a tale in which it discovers itself to us in woman's shape, and, so disguised, puts the fear of life and death on dwellers on the land. As for Fionn Mac Cumhail, he never came into his own, as it were, until the Muiltearch Bhuidhe met him; and perhaps those are not far wrong who say that the Muiltearch Bhuidhe\* was the Western Ocean in the flesh. At all events, it is related that the Fenians spent a year and a day in abstinence from the hunt, and that all that time they

\* A witch that figures in the Fenian Saga.

## The Scottish Review

passed at the edge of the sea, eating winkles and limpets, until the rocks of the shore were as bare as the jaw of a boar. And the sweetest music the Fenians ever heard was the whistle of Caoilte at noon-tide, giving them to know that at long last he was again on the track of the deer,

A hundred prosperities to the winkles !  
A hand stretched out to the limpets !  
The piercing, round, hard whistle of Caoilte was heard  
On the north side of Loinneachan.

It is natural enough, then, that the Fenians, who had to struggle with the sea, should consider it as their enemy ; and anything living that is an enemy has feelings ; and that which has feelings during the day, the same has blood and flesh when comes the night—at all events it has the power of doing good or working evil. Perhaps, then, it is not all extravagant to think that the Muileartach or the Muileartach Bhuidhe was the Western Ocean in the flesh. And, assuredly, there was never seen under the sun or the moon a hag so horrible and so forbidding as she,

\* \* \* \* \*

Her purple countenance was of the hue of coal,  
And her teeth, knobby, decayed.

There was one sombre eye in her head  
That was swifter than the star of winter,\*  
On her head curled soft foam  
Like the bark peelings of an ancient aspen-tree.

\* That is, that twinkled or seemed to revolve like a star.

## The Spell of the Sea

We need not be at all surprised that Fionn tried to  
bribe her away by fairy-power,

Mac Cumhail would give yon to her without disgust,  
Ten hundred dogs, perfect hind-hunters ;  
She took the bribe, and the rest,  
Ten hundred ruddy golden apples.

But how should she have been open to purchase or a  
bribe, seeing that a whole universe of gold and silver  
was already in her possession in the depths of the sea ?

The fortune of Erin, though I should get it all,  
Its gold, its silver, and its treasure ;  
I would rather have on board my ship  
The heads of Oscar, and Diarmad, and Coirill.

But, under the fury of the hag, there was for the  
Fenians—until she and Fionn met one another—neither  
drawing of hand, nor staying of foot,

She was engaging them one after the other  
As the blade flashes through the flame,  
Till Mac Cumhail of the luck  
And the Muileartach met, hand to hand.

And, according to the tale which Campbell of Islay  
got in Uist, although the hag was valiant, yet stronger  
was the luck of Fionn,

Her side was holed by a thrust,  
Drops of her blood fell to the heather,  
The Muileartach was slain by the King,  
But if she was slain, she was not easy killing.

## The Scottish Review

But we have heard another version of that tale—that the flesh of the hag was like the water of the waves, coming together again immediately after each cut,

It is like cutting the billows,  
Cutting the flesh of the Fuath :  
As drop joins to drop  
So flesh joins to flesh in her side.

But we need not go to young John of Islay, or to Uist, for the end of the tale—it is repeating itself by day and by night. Fionn and Ossian are no longer with us, but the Western Ocean is still there, its tides flooding and ebbing, whether or not the Muileartach lost her head.

But there is one thing about the ocean which we must needs admit, and that is that it is growing lazy in its old age, and that nowadays it is seldom seen going beyond its own bounds. And there is a tale about that also. "Many long ages ago," says an Eigg *Sgeulaiche*,\* "men were like the sea-gulls, so that they could not be drowned ; and from the White Strand of Moidart to the going down of the sun—and, Great One ! that is a long way away—in neither shallow nor deep could the sea lay hold of a single companion, so that if my little lassie† had any business to do on land, there was nothing for it but that she should herself go in quest of it. But to-day the depths are spotted with the choice of the earth, and little must be their worth if the sea cannot find a companion among them." And, according to the tale, that is

\* A romance-teller.

† The sea.

## The Spell of the Sea .

what she got, companions, or, as they are styled, "Sea-lovers," as smart as ever sat on rowing benches, or ever thrust oars through thole-pins ; and there is no bay or harbour in island or on coast in which they cannot sometimes be seen, obeying the behests of the sea. "When I was a bachelor," says a man of the race of the Seals in North Uist, "we found one day the corpse of a man in the sea-wrack, and as we did not know who he was, nor whence he came, we were going to bury him at the edge of the shore, in order that the sea might not have far to go in search of him, if she wanted him. But whilst we were lifting him we noticed that his finger-nails were pink and well-shaped, and we said to one another that he at all events was of the great folk of the earth, and that we would bury him properly—as was customary—along with other Christians in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity, which was done. In the mouth of the night, a boat was seen coming through the straits, without a stitch of canvas to her, though she had a way on her whose better I, at all events, could not wish for. But there she was, as bare of sail as she was the day she first left the shore, and she travelling very swiftly ! In the twinkling of an eye, her side was against the jetty, and six lads leapt out of her. They went up to the Chapel of the Holy Trinity, and the Good One knows what they had on their shoulders in their returning. *Och ! Och !* the sea will claim her own. Woe to the one that crosses her ! "

It has always been the custom of landsmen to lament the state of the Sea-lovers, and to imagine that affairs would not be half as bad as they are, if they got their

## The Scottish Review

death on their pillows, and along with it, kinsman-sleep beneath the turf of the grave-yard.

O King ! would that thou, my loved one, wert in thy sleep  
In the little hamlet by the sea-shore,  
In the Church of the Holy Trinity  
Where numerous are thy kinsfolk,  
So that the tear of my two eyes  
Would be as the dew that greys the wreath.

But, however warm the tear, the sea-sorrow obtains no relief,

All those that I love are wretched ones,  
Cast away in the moving depths of the ocean,  
Bruised and battered by the waves,  
Buffeted this way and that by the rocks.

As for that, it is necessary to say that though many is the Sea-lover that has made a journey back to Land-of-the-Living, yet not one of them has ever been heard to speak ill of Land-under-the-Wave.

"Cold is thy bed to-night, O man of my heart," said a widow to the shade of her husband, and he meeting her one night by the shore.

"Neither cold nor warm," says he, "but just what I would have it to be, if I were to get that which I would seek."

"If it is not cold, my love," says she, "lonely must it be."

"That is news to me," says he. "On the same rock along with me are warriors from Scandinavia, poets from Ireland, and Scottish romance-tellers, and that which neither they nor I have heard, the same is knowledge to the Seals and to the Swan."

## The Spell of the Sea

"Jewel of my heart!" cries she. "How foolish are we to lament the state of the dead, and they in so good company in Land-under-the-Wave!"

"It is the truth that thou sayest, my little love," says he, and he vanishing from her sight.

There is another Sea-lover that frequents the Straits of Odair or Odrum between the two Heskers to the west of Uist, and according to the tale about him, poor is Land-of-the-Living in comparison with Land-under-the-Wave.

In the Straits of Odrum,  
Where sleeps the seal,  
And where no man's voice is heard,  
But the sound of the wave and the call of the goose.

As a nurse that nourishes her children,  
And she hushing them to rest;  
There is where the fret of the ocean  
Ceaselessly rocks us to sleep.

There, the regal seal is singing,  
And the swan utters her note by his side;  
There is the mermaid who dreams in secret  
Of some hero that has claimed her heart.

The ship sails on  
With her youthful crew through the Straits  
In quest of glory and plunder,  
In quest of glad music and love.

But the ship will come to her drowning,  
And her warriors will go to their doom;  
And no sweet slumber will rest on maiden  
Bereft of her lover, who lies not in the grave.

Alas! in the land of the barley  
Strife and death can never cease,  
And the sorrow that assails mankind  
But increases as the world grows older.

## The Scottish Review

But I and my true love  
Will ever be in our heaven beneath the waves,  
Where neither sorrow nor age shall reach us,  
Until freed shall be the heroes of all times.

The third part of the home consists in being satisfied with it, and it would appear that the Sea-lovers are fully pleased both with their habitation and their stepmother. But though pleasant and credible the tale, it is difficult to imagine that its authorship is due to women, at all events to those of them that have lost those treasures of which the sea has despoiled them. The stepmother is not a favourite among women, and she that should say from the depth of her heart, "The wish of my soul is, that my children should be more happy with their stepmother (if they have one) than ever they were with me," has yet to be believed. And it is no defect in the love of women if the sea's good nursing of their children causes those warm tears to flow which her cruelty and mercilessness could never extort from them. The grave is greedy enough; but it neither seeks, nor asks, for anything save blood and flesh and bone. The sea demands all those things, and others in addition—man, both body and soul. So it may well be that, "Out of the mouth of the ocean there comes hope; but from the grave nothing is to be expected"; but, when hope is dead, there is naught in the grief which says, "The grave has taken my son from me," in comparison with that which affirms, "The sea has deprived me of the love of my son."

But, though great is the hatred of women to Land-under-the-Wave, yet greater than that is the love

## The Spell of the Sea

which they bear to their dead male-kind ; and some of them at all events are ready to inhabit the deep, on account of the love which they have for those that are dear to them.

The month of sportive gladness and music-laughter,  
Pity is that I was not right at thy side,  
On the ridge of the ocean, or at the shore's edge,  
In whatever place the tide has left thee ;  
Side by side, my love, as we always were,  
Side by side, with no fear of parting,  
Always at rest, our croonings silent—  
Alas ! woe's me ! my love hears me not,  
The wave has drowned my doleful sighs.

But there were those who were more fortunate than these, and who got what they sought. It is now about one hundred and fifty years since Ailean Donn sailed out of Stornoway in order to put the band-of-marriage on himself and the Jewel of the Isles, the daughter of the Laird of Scalpay in the Hebrides ; but, between sail-raising and sail-lowering, the Sea-mischief got a grip of him, and at that time when it was right for him (if the right was there), to be placing the ring on the finger of his mistress, he was lying under the foam of the waves. And if this put the daughter of the Laird of Scalpay to sorrow and grief, it also put her anguish to song ; and to this very day the Sea-widow laments her sad fate in the music of that stricken one's song—

The desire of my soul, O King of Glory !  
Is for me not to go down in earth and shroud  
To a hole in the ground, or to some other hiding-place,  
But to the clump of sea-wrack that holds thee, my Ailein—  
O Ailein Donn ! o ! with thee would I be.

## The Scottish Review

And to him she went. When the time of her departure came, the wish of her kinsfolk was to ferry her across the narrows to the burial-ground of her ancestors, but though many is the attempt that they made, fate and weather and water opposed it, so that the end of the tale was that the will of the fierce sea was fulfilled in that "clump of sea-wrack that held Ailein Donn."

So it was and so it is—everything to the Ocean ; and in that saying is told the story of the Isles.

There is many a spell-like thing in the deep, besides the Sea-lovers. The old men would say, "*Bed air luim gun a shamhailt bhi fo thuinn*"\*—Sea-cattle, Sea-wolves, Sea-cats, Sea-serpents, and so forth. But there are three there that belong to the romance and to the spell of the sea more than the rest do ; and these are, the Seal, the Swan, and the Mermaid. Not one of these three is of the true essence of the sea, though long is the time that they have spent under the waves. If right were really right, to-day the seals would be Kings of Scandinavia ; but when they were young they were so comely in their persons and so smart in their actions, that their stepmother conceived the breast-hatred against them, and there was no living for her till she had bowed their heads and humbled their hearts. She spent seven days and seven years teaching them the Black Art, and when she had procured that which would suffice (and the female art along with it !) she put her step-children under spells and crosses,

\* This is one of those rhyming sayings in which Gaelic, like Spanish, abounds. This one means that there are things in the sea that are not on land.

## The Spell of the Sea

saying that for ever should they be neither fish, flesh, nor fowl ; and that " their sea-lust should be for the land and their land-lust for the sea, as long as wave should beat on shore." Therefore, to this very day, the Clan of the King of Scandinavia are under spells, singing their lays on the rocks, ever lamenting the present, and always reviling the past ; and, as the old men are apt to say, " Any one can tell by looking at their two eyes, and listening to their songs, that the blood of Kings runs in their every vein." And, according to the tale, it is part of the spells under which they lie that thrice in each year they are obliged to resume their proper shapes at the full of the moon, in order that their loss may be refreshed in their minds and their anguish renewed in their souls, by seeing their kinsfolk under the rule of the stranger. And it is said that " if thou seest one of them at that very time, thou wilt give the love of thy heart to her or to him, and that, should marriage be in thy mind at the time, a wedding will follow." There are still children of those marriages in the Isles. Of such is Clan MacCodrum ; and it is said that to them also belongs everyone that excels in music.

It is scarcely necessary to say that it is not lucky to kill a seal, and that no hunter that ever did the like has fared well. The poets of the hills may sing—

I would slay for thee a wild-goose, a seal, and a swan,  
And the birds at the ends of the branches ;

but if the poet were an Islesman, he would be more humane ; if not, he would be taught to be humane, as has frequently happened. One day that some

## The Scottish Review

men from Canna were hunting on the Isle-of-the-Seals, they espied a Seal's calf among some sea-weed, and he, gazing at them with his two great mild eyes, just as though he were about to say, "I am of the seed of Kings ; slay not their off-spring." But the seal was killed by one of the men that was quicker with his hand, and had a harder heart, than the rest, and as soon as he was slain, the wind and the ocean rose in fury, and, with the men, there was then no standing-of-feet, and they, like the limpets, clinging to the rocks. Says the man of the hard heart, between two violent squalls, "It is not without cause that this has happened, men. There are two Protestants in our company, and it is plain that Mary and her Son are displeased." On the heel of the word, the two men were seized, and there was nothing for them to do but to surrender their lives, or their creed, to the ocean. But the children of Error were ready to do anything under the sun rather than part with their lives, so the end of the affair was that both were baptised in a pool of salt water into the Holy Catholic Church. But that did not stay wind or wave ; and on the third day he that was oldest and wisest of the company said, "This is my own opinion, men—that slaying and killing has nothing to do with creed, and that if the Seal-calf were yet alive we should be more fortunate than we now are." Each man then made a vow that, if he should escape with his life, he would never again molest or kill a Seal. That night the men were in their own homes at Canna.

Now, if in the history of the Seal there is much that is supernatural, there is much more of it in the history

## The Spell of the Sea

of the Swan. In the tales she is styled, "The Daughter of the Twelve Moons," and the old men tell that, "when the moon is on the wane, the swan is in her full plumage." But, however that may be, the Swan is, without doubt, a queen's daughter. In the days of mystery, according to the tale, there were two queens so beautiful that it was impossible to say which was the more comely, and the other being present; and the end of the matter was, that one of them put the other under spells, commanding her "for ever to fly from height to height in the shape of a bird, harsh-noted on sea, awkward on land, sweet-voiced under the moon, dumb under the sun"—and the swan is still under those spells. Perhaps the meaning of the legend is to be found in the saying, "The envy of the sun of the moon." At all events, it is related that, when the Flood subsided, the moon was at the full, and that she was so bright that night, that a man might have seen the prickle left by the sea-lice in his foot, supposing that there were a prickle in it. This put the sun, and she crouching down in the ocean, to rage and to fury. "I will rise," says she, "though it yet be long before the bird tastes the water, and I will disfigure the moon and all the stars." She did that, and if she did it, the moon lost a third of her light, and that third is still wanting to her. Perhaps, then, that third we have in the shape of the Swan, the Daughter of the Twelve Moons, and she sweet-voiced under the moon, but dumb under the sun.

There is many a tale about the Swan in the Isles, and they all relate that she is melancholy in her life, and lonely in her death; and that her favourite song

## The Scottish Review

is the one she sings to entice the Sea-lovers on to the rocks. Who has not heard of the wounded Swan that swam from Ireland to Iona, and that there found refuge and healing ?

A day that Calum-cille went out  
Early in the morning,  
A swan was seen, *guile ! guile !*  
The white swan swimming  
And singing her death-song  
*Guile ! guile !*

The white swan, and she wounded, wounded,  
The white swan, and she bruised, bruised,  
*Guile ! guile !* and the second-sight on her,  
*Guile ! guile !* and the second-omen on her.  
Life and death.

*Guile ! guile !*

Whence has thou swam, white swan ?  
Says my beloved little Calum-cille ;  
From Erin I have swam, *guile ! guile !*  
From the Fenians, my wound, *guile ! guile !*

The wound of death.

*Guile ! guile !*

White swan ! swan of Erin !  
It is I that am friendly to the distressed,  
The mild eye of Christ on thy wound,  
May the balm of compassion, and love that dies not  
Restore thee to health  
*Guile ! guile !*

White swan of Erin, *guile ! guile !*  
Thou shalt suffer no hurt, *guile ! guile !*  
O mistress of the flood, *guile ! guile !*  
O mistress of the wave, *guile ! guile !*  
To Jesus the glory.  
*Guile ! guile !*

## The Spell of the Sea

By the way, may it not be that the swimming and the wounding and the healing of the Swan of Erin symbolise the wanderings of our people from the dark days of the Fenians until the time when the light of the Gospel was poured on them ? It would be easy to dilate on this theme ; but it does not belong to our present subject.

Now we know whence came the Swan and the Seal, but whence hails the Mermaid ? That is not a difficult matter to make plain. Once upon a time there was a maiden, and on a day of days she went to the spring for a drink of water. Says she, seeing her image reflected in the fountain, " I know not if there is another in all Scotland as beautiful as I am."

" Thou art foolish, O love of women-kind," says her nurse, and she looking over the other's shoulder, and seeing the reflection. " Though great is Scotland, the world is still larger."

" If it is bigger, it is no better," says the maiden. " And at all events, I have seen what I have seen, the best of the Knights from the four corners of the globe, and each one of them swore and vowed that my like they had never seen, either before them or after them."

" That may be," says the nurse, " but though vast the land, yet it is small in comparison with the ocean ; and many is the riddle whose answer is concealed in the deep."

That very night the maiden went to a famous professor of the Black Art, and she says, " O Man of the Black Art, give me of knowledge of the sea."

" I will make of thee a fish," says he.

## The Scottish Review

"That will not suffice," says she. "The eye of woman must be in my head, so that I may see and compare the beauty of my sex."

"I will put," says he, "a woman's head on a fish."

"That will not suffice," she says. "A woman's heart must be in my breast, so that I may proffer and accept love, if I am to have lovers."

"The wish of thy heart to thee!" says he; and together they made their way to the sea-shore.

And ever since that night there is to be seen (they say) a beautiful woman with locks of gold, and with the tail of a fish, swimming the waves, and always seeking that which cannot be found, a woman more lovely than herself. And if the report is true, although she got knowledge of the Sea, yet no happiness has come to her from that; for when she proffers love, it is never to cold blood, but always to warm.

The spell of the sea is as diffused and as deep as the ocean itself, and the tale would not be complete without some mention of the Phantom-ships, as they are styled, and also of the Phantom Isles. It is a good ship that returns to the harbour out of which she sailed; but long before rising-time the eyes of the women would be searching the sea, and getting some news from her about the state of the men. If a Phantom-ship should be seen, and a red light about it, it is a sign of life. If one should be seen that has a white light about it, it is a death-warning,

I saw a Phantom-ship last night,  
A baleful light, the sign of death in her rigging,  
And I understood that my young and only son  
Lies beneath the claw of yonder ocean.

## The Spell of the Sea

And if the eyes of the people may be trusted, many is the time that the Sea-widows themselves have taken passage in a Phantom-ship, and that there is seen at the mouth of night,

A great Phantom-ship sailing the narrows,  
A woman at her prow, continually weeping,  
A woman at her stern, continually wailing,  
A woman in her thwarts, continually moaning.

Is there not something comforting in the thought that it is the ship which carries tidings of death to the women which also bears them across the narrows to sing their laments for the dead? But that need cause us no astonishment—the fierceness of the ocean is never greater than her kindness. And if she is warm-hearted, in consequence of that is she also strictly just. It was not once or twice in the days of mystery that she chastised the injustice of the foreigner, and that she banished the wrong-doer to that place which is reserved for those that work mischief. "Easy were it to tell by the Phantom-ship," the old men would say. "If yon was her object, she would be always aflame." It is not so very long since she was seen going about this very business; and this is the tale as it was got from one of those that saw:—

"We had just got in under shelter of land when there was seen a shining cloud, as if it were above the Straits of Mull. My mate says to me, 'I'll wager my ears that what is there is Tobermory raised to the skies.' And, indeed, it would have been little surprising had it been so, and the lights of the town right out into the very straits themselves. But no sooner

## The Scottish Review

were the words spoken than she herself appeared—for it was her very own self that was there—round the Point of Ardnamurchan, and her prow was headed for Eigg, and, O great one ! how swiftly she was travelling ! There we were, we two, and our breath in our bosoms, and our hearts leaping out of their husks, and we dead certain all the time that if salt-water would not drown, fire would destroy. But, jewel of men ! the hour was not yet come ; and in the twinkling of an eye the great beast sped past us, and she in the shape of a red wolf, from prow to stern, and from cut-water to the top of her masts ! And, O Mary, beloved ! horror itself was the screaming below decks. And what course did she sail after that ? The Fortunate One alone knows ! but the last sight we got of her, she was reaching out to the Straits of Canna, and the Western Ocean under her prow.”

We will not follow the Phantom-ship any further that voyage out ; but, of a truth, many is the time she would well repay following—when the fire of the unjust is extinguished, and her gleaming sides are like the sun, and she pursuing her course to Land-of-the-ever-Young, or to others of the Phantom-isles, such as, the Isle of Emeralds, the Isle-of-Perpetual-Rest, the gleaming Isle-of-the-Light-of-the-Moon, and the White-Isle-of-the-ever-Generous. Doubtless, there are other isles there that are by no means as pleasant as these—the Isle-of-Constant-Debt, where the folk of the long-tongues are sent ; the Isle of-Shadows, where reside envy and the evil-eye ; and Rocabarraidh-under-the Wave (to the west of Barra), where the great demons are perpetually devising wickedness against the sons

## The Spell of the Sea

of men. It has happened to the fairy banner of the MacLeods that Rocabarraidh has already twice come against it, but the third time,

When Rocabarraidh shall go against it,  
The world is fated to be destroyed.

It is said that certain of our learned men are now making wild-duck tracks, or perhaps one should say wild-goose tracks, for those Phantom Isles, and that they think they have got a title for the most of them in the name "Irt"; but, whether they are right, or whether they are wrong, vain is their labour. The Phantom Isles are of the heart, and not of the vision; and though Land-of-the-ever-Young should to-morrow be located, the next day there would arise, farther out to sea, other Phantom Isles; and that day will never dawn in which eye or tread-of-foot shall make the land of our heart's desires.

Now, if this page would admit of it (a thing which it will not permit) it would be easy to illustrate how, from birth to death, the life of the Isleman is covered, as it were, with the Spell of the Sea. It was said that according to the state of the tide when he was born, so would be a man's vigour and his mental temperament, and that the luck of the flood, or the ill-luck of the ebb, would be his, as long as he lived. And if it happened that the moon and the ocean coincided, as to their states, at that time, it was said that that made the matter all the more sure.

Dear little Calum Cille of my love  
Was born when the tide was on the flood,  
At time of a waxing moon;  
And it was himself that was the precious jewel.

## The Scottish Review

And according to the tale, when Judas was born, the tide was ebbing, and the moon on the wane ; and because this was so his life was under an unhappy ray, from first to last. It is also said that Pilate was born just as the tide was stationary ; and how plain was the effect of that in his life ! He never knew which side to take, and there was neither resolution in his actions, nor any reliance to be had in his word. But not one, or even two, *ceilidh*\* would suffice to exhaust that tale, or to make us understand to what a degree the religious faith and the diversions of the people, their traditions, and all their manners and customs and opinions are tinged with the Spell of the Sea. It would be little astonishing, indeed, if the temper of the people were perverted, and altogether spoilt, under the powerful influence of that spell ; but it is said that " of the Council of the Winds is the Ocean," and since, in consequence, it used to be believed that " the Wind is of the Council of the King of the Elements," there was always something in the minds of the people that prevented the dominion of the sea from amounting to ascendancy on her part, and from servitude on theirs. But, after, and in spite of, all that, the beginning and the end of the tale is, that of the Ocean is, and ever was, the life of the Islesman, and that as the ear of youth opens, so does the ear of old-age close, to the roar of the waves.

The mist and the spray,  
The spray and the mist,  
The mist and the spray  
Are in the eyes of my loved one,

\* *Ceilidh*, a social visit paid by one party to another.

## The Spell of the Sea

In the eyes of my loved one;  
O Thou Who didst open the eye of youth,  
Close it to-night in the sleep-of-death,  
In the sleep-of-death.\*

The roar of the waves,  
Yonder's the roar,  
Yonder's the roar,  
In the ear of my loved one,  
In the ear of my loved one;  
O Thou Who has rigged the new-ship,  
Steer her this night over the waves of death,  
Over the waves of death.

\* That is a slumber as sound, seemingly, as death itself.



"One of the Choicest items on Nature's menu."

PURE BREAKFAST

# Fry's Cocoa.

"THE HIGHEST COCOA VALUE OBTAINABLE"

4½d. per  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. Tin

Compare with others at 7d.

1720 — THE OLDEST HOUSE IN THE TRADE — 1814.

**BRAND'S  
ESSENCE OF BEEF  
MUTTON & CHICKEN  
FOR ALL CASES OF EXHAUSTION  
AND WEAK DIGESTION**

Published  
Quarterly,  
First Week  
In February,  
May, August,  
& November.

## GUTH NA BLIADHNA

Annual  
Subscription  
Post Free, £/-  
or  
1 Dollar  
24 Cents.

If you wish to keep abreast of the times, and to be apprised of what the leading Gaelic minds are thinking, "GUTH NA BLIADHNA" is indispensable.

This high-class Magazine deals with all subjects of general interest, viz., Commerce, Politics, Art, Literature, Sport, etc. Every Scotman, and all interested in Celtic affairs, should subscribe. It consists of over 120 pages of text, and is printed in excellent type. The best writers in Gaelic and English are employed on its staff, and the literary status of the Magazine is as high as that of the best quarterlies published. "Guth na Bliaadhna is, I have no hesitation in saying, superior to all the Gaelic periodical literature at present being published. It is impossible not to recognise and admire the virility of its articles."

— "Q" in Stirling Smith.

SEND P.O. for £/-, or 1 Dollar 24 Cents (One Year's Subscription), NOW  
Overseas Cheques and Notes accepted.

OFFICES, - - - - - 1844 MILL STREET, PERTH, SCOTLAND.  
Single copies, price 1/3 each, post free, may be had of A. MACLAREN & Sons,  
56 Argyle Street, Glasgow.

Printed by McRae, Tammell, & Mathew, 13-14 MILL Street, Perth.